

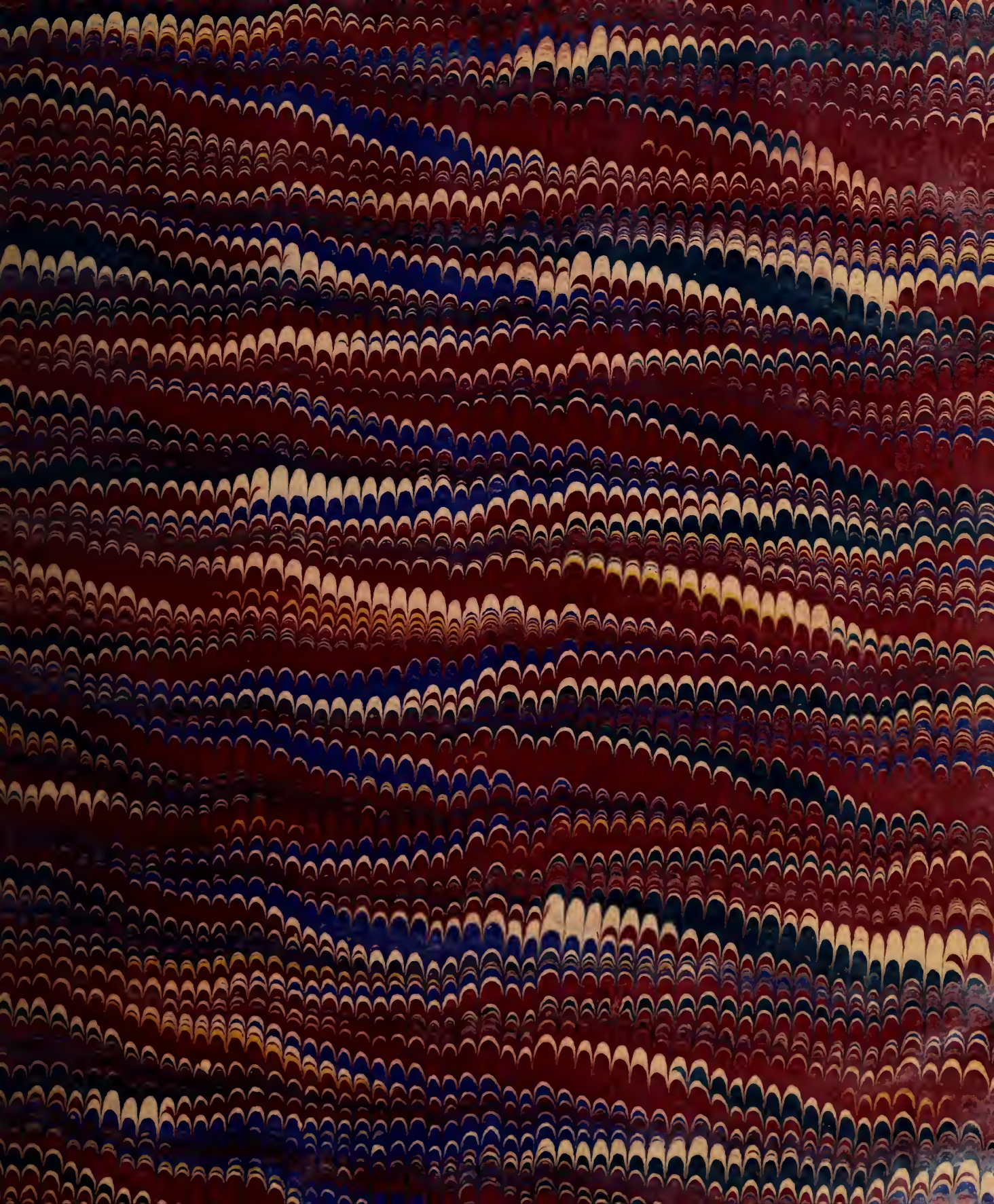
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A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY
IN ASIA.
IN TWO PARTS.

IMPRIMATUR,

J. PARSONS,
VICE-CAN.

COLL. BALL.
Jan. 9, 1808.

A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY
IN ASIA.
IN TWO PARTS.
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
A BRIEF HISTORIC VIEW
OF THE
PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL IN DIFFERENT NATIONS
SINCE ITS FIRST PROMULGATION ;
ILLUSTRATED BY A CHRONOLOGICAL CHART.

BY THE
REV. HUGH PEARSON, M. A.
OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

— Σεὺς ὀρθωτὴρ πέλοι
Τὸν περιστρέποντα χρόνον, ὦν
ἔραται, καὶρὸν διδοῦς. PIND.

OXFORD,
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS FOR THE AUTHOR :
Sold by J. PARKER ; by J. HATCHARD, Piccadilly, and by Messrs. RIVINGTON,
St. Paul's Church Yard, London.

1808.

BV3150

P4

TO THE

REV. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, D.D.

VICE PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM,
IN BENGAL,

THE FOLLOWING DISSERTATION

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF UNFEIGNED RESPECT

AND ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

*Extract from a Letter of the Rev. Claudius Buchanan, D. D.
Vice-Provost of the College of Fort William in Bengal, to the
Rev. the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, dated
June 4, 1805.*

“SIR,

“I HAVE the honour to propose to the University of Oxford the following Subjects of Prize Composition.

“For the best Work in English Prose embracing the following Subjects :

“I. The probable Design of the divine Providence in subjecting so large a portion of Asia to the British dominion.

“II. The Duty, the Means, and the Consequences of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental Tongues, and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia.

“III. A Brief Historic View of the Progress of the Gospel in different nations, since its first promulgation ; illustrated by Maps, shewing its luminous tract throughout the world ; with chronological notices of its duration in particular places. The regions of Mahomedanism to be marked with *red*, and those of Paganism with a *dark* colour. £500.

“The Candidates to prefix such Title to the Work as they may think fit.”

The determination of the Prize was directed to be announced on the fourth day of June, 1807, and a Copy of the Work to be presented by the University to the King.

A Convocation being holden on the thirteenth of December, 1805, it was agreed to accept the said Proposal ; and on the fourth of June, 1807, being the day appointed for that purpose, the Prize was adjudged to the Rev. HUGH PEARSON, M. A. of St. John's College.

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St. Paul's Church Yard, London.

1808.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST

IN THE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

BY

JOHN RICHARDSON

Author of the History of the

Reign of King James the First

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Second

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Third

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Fourth

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Fifth

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Sixth

and the History of the

Reign of King James the Seventh

TO THE

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VICE PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM
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THE FOLLOWING DISSERTATION

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WITH SENTIMENTS OF UNFEIGNED RESPECT

AND ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE extensive dominions which Great Britain has acquired in the East are so intimately connected with her general power and prosperity, that no inquiry concerning them can be deemed altogether destitute of importance. The subjects of the following Dissertation are, therefore, entitled to no small share of attention and regard, since they relate to the highest interests both of India and of Britain. The direction, which has of late been given to the public mind with respect to them, will be applauded by all who consider, that the first duty, as it is the undoubted policy, of every government, is to provide for the civil and religious welfare of its subjects. Much discussion has, in consequence, been already produced ; and it cannot be doubted, that a full and fair investigation of these points will issue in a general conviction of the necessity of diffusing Christianity in Asia.

The Author of the following pages is fully aware of the difficulty of such an investigation, and of the imperfect manner in which he has conducted it. He could have wished, that his work

had been more worthy of the distinguished approbation with which it has been honoured. He trusts, however, that he has evinced the probable Design of the divine Providence in subjecting so large a portion of Asia to our dominion ; that he has established the Obligation of the British government to promote the propagation of the Christian religion in that quarter of the world ; that he has recommended Means, the adoption of which would eventually secure that object ; and that he has pointed out the beneficial Consequences which would probably result from its attainment.

It may perhaps be asked, why the Author should, in one particular, have reversed the order in which the subjects were arranged by Dr. Buchanan, in prefixing, instead of subjoining, the Brief Historic View of the Progress of Christianity ? In reply to such a question, it may be observed, that the view of the general propagation of the Gospel from its first promulgation, ought naturally to precede the consideration of any measures for its extension yet further in any particular country ; in order that the experience of past ages might direct us in the present, and that the means now proposed to be adopted might be sanctioned by former examples. It may, however, be thought, that this Historic View, though as concise as the very extensive nature of the subject would allow, detains the reader unnecessarily from the subsequent discussions, and bears an undue proportion to the rest of the work. Such an objection, the Author conceives, derives its principal force from the extraordinary attention, which the question relative
to

to the propagation of Christianity in India has lately attracted. Under other circumstances, the Historic View of its progress would have appeared sufficiently interesting, to have authorized the assignment of a larger space than it at present occupies.

The Author does not present the annexed Chart to the public as answering his own wishes, or as fulfilling the intention of Dr. Buchanan, in requiring maps for the illustration of the progress of the Gospel. Its design is to describe the prevalence of Christianity, Mohammedism, and Paganism, in different ages, throughout the world, since the Christian æra; and by a reference to the Historic View, every part of it may be sufficiently explained. It would have been desirable to have expressed the extent and population of the countries, in which the religions in question severally predominate. But, after much reflexion, the Author found, that this was an object, which could not be attained within the limits of the time appointed by Dr. Buchanan for the completion of the work.

With respect to his sources of information, the situation of the Author was, in general, unfavourable. He ought at the same time to acknowledge, that, in some parts of his Dissertation, he had the advantage of the suggestions of one distinguished person, whose sentiments on every point connected with Oriental policy are entitled to the highest consideration.

It only remains for the Author, in dismiffing the following sheets, to exprefs his cordial wifh, that they may in fome meafure be instrumental in promoting the great object, which the benevolent Propofer of the prefent inquiry has in view ; and in the accomplifhment of which the Author feels deeply interefted, being firmly convinced, that it would be eminently conducive to the glory of God, the happinefs of his fellow creatures, and the profperity of his country.

ELMDON, WARWICKSHIRE.

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REPORT

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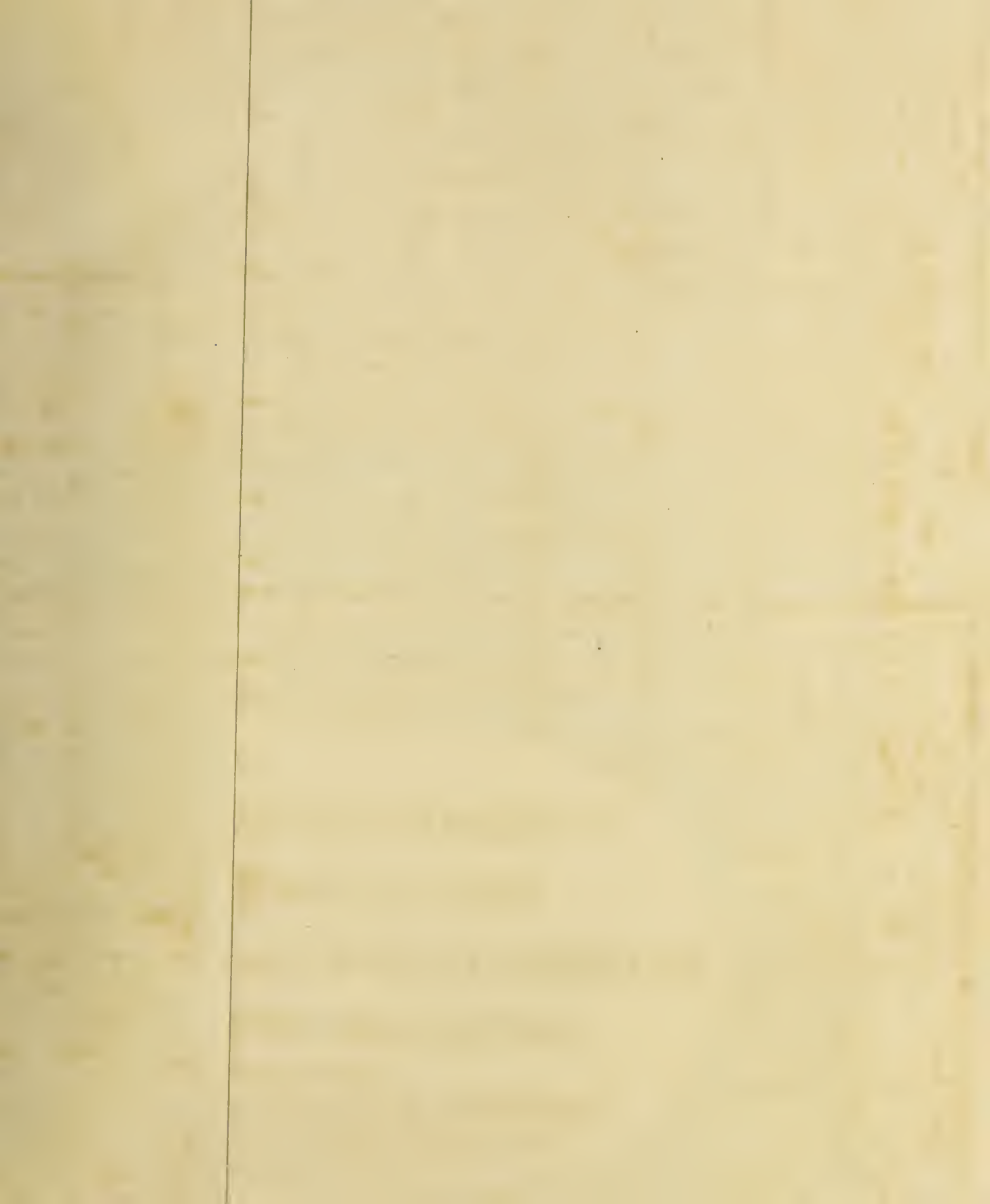
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A
BRIEF HISTORIC VIEW
OF THE
PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL
IN
DIFFERENT NATIONS SINCE ITS FIRST PROMULGATION.





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BRIEF HISTORIC VIEW

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IN DIFFERENT NATIONS SINCE ITS FIRST PROMULGATION.

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Metam occidentis sidera permeans
Obliqua, vitali calore
Cuncta creatque, fovetque, alitque.

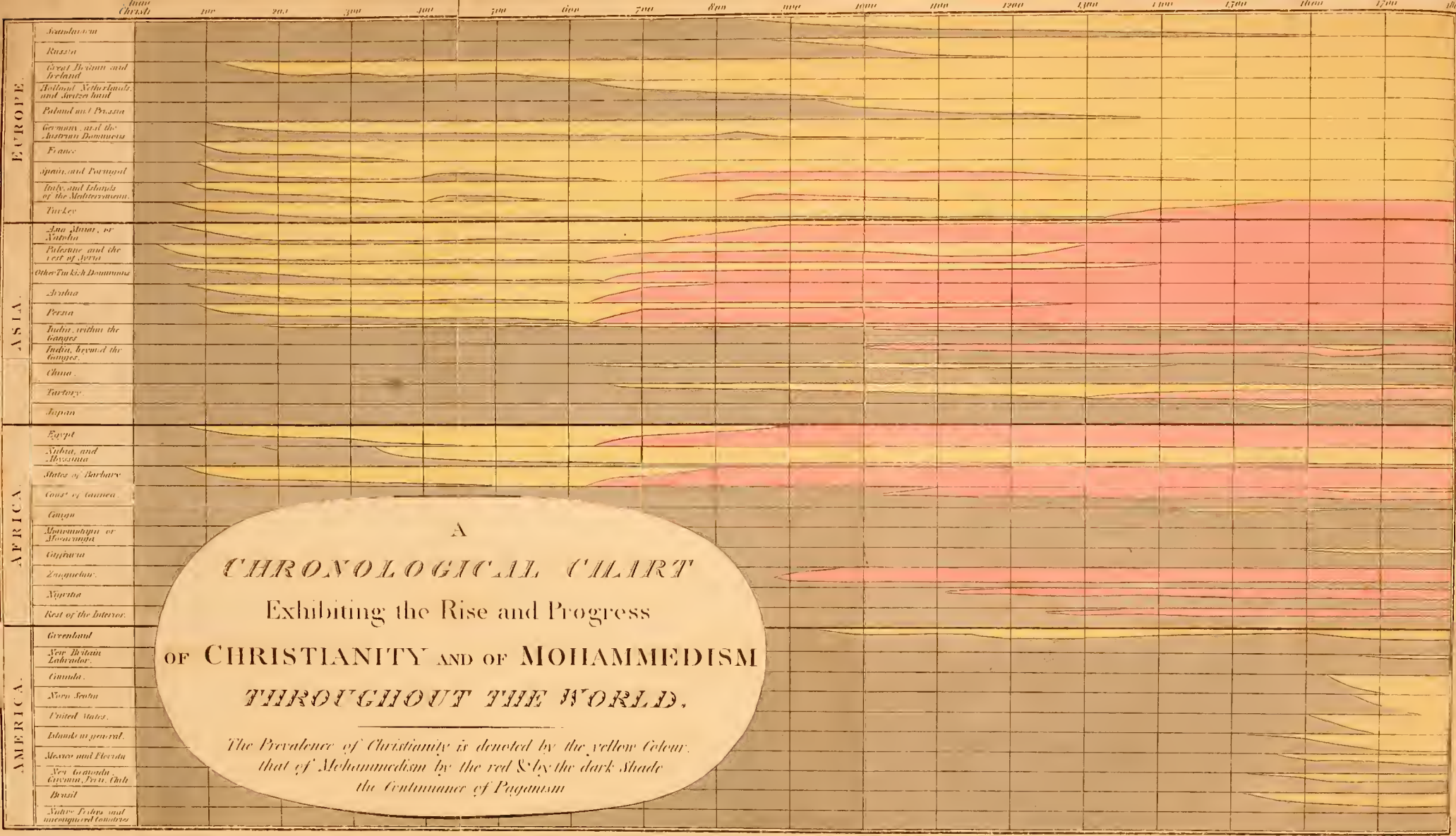
G. BUCHANAN.

THE state of the world at the introduction of Christianity was such as at once evinced its necessity, and presented the most favourable opportunity for its extensive propagation.

State of the world previous to the coming of Christ.

The various nations, of which the Roman empire was composed, were sunk in the grossest superstition, and debased by the prevalence of the most pernicious vices^a. The utmost of what mere human wisdom could do towards the moral improve-

^a See note A.



ment of the world had been fairly tried during the long course of four thousand years; and the result of that protracted trial had served to prove, that the world by its own wisdom knew not God, and was unable to discover and enforce the principles of true religion and virtue. The Jews, the only people to whom a divine communication had been made, were in a state of degeneracy and corruption: it was time therefore that the supreme Governor of the universe, who for wise though mysterious reasons had so long permitted this ignorance, should at length introduce some clearer and more effectual manifestation of his will, to correct the errors of mankind, and to rescue them from the corruptions and misery in which they were involved.

For the successful promulgation of such a divine revelation, *the political situation* of the greater part of the world afforded peculiar advantages. Nations differing widely from each other, both as to their language and their manners, were comprehended within the vast limits of the Roman empire, and united together in social intercourse. An easy communication was thus opened to the remotest countries; and the most ignorant and barbarous people had gradually felt the civilizing influence of the laws, the commerce, and the literature of the Romans. At the birth of Christ, the empire was, moreover, in a state of greater freedom from wars and dissensions, than it had been during many preceding years; as if the tranquillity which it then enjoyed had been designed not only to facilitate the progress of his religion, but to be descriptive of the benign and peaceful effects which it was intended to produce among mankind.

Birth and
ministry of
Christ.

For such beneficent purposes, and at such an auspicious period, the Son of God descended upon earth, and assumed our nature. It would be foreign to the purpose of this brief view of the progress

gress of Christianity, to dwell on the succeeding history of Christ himself. Suffice it to say, that, during the course of his ministry upon earth, our Lord demonstrated the truth of his divine mission by a series of unquestionable miracles; delivered to his Disciples the leading doctrines and precepts of his religion; and, shortly after his ascension, qualified them, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost, for the great and important work of propagating his religion throughout the world.

It was the express command of Christ, that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This is a passage of Scripture, which, as it has been justly observed^b, at once points out what the Christian religion is, and where we may look for its commencement. The first Christian Church was accordingly established at Jerusalem; but within a short time after the memorable day of Pentecost, many thousands of the Jews, partly natives of Judæa, and partly inhabitants of other Roman provinces, were converted to the faith of Christ. The persecution which soon after succeeded the death of the proto-martyr St. Stephen was the occasion of propagating the Gospel throughout Palestine. The Apostles alone ventured to remain at Jerusalem. The rest of the Disciples dispersed themselves into the several parts of Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria; and wherever they went, they successfully preached the doctrine of Christ.

CENT.

I.

The Christian Church first established in Jerusalem.

And throughout Palestine.

While the Apostles and others were thus diligently employed in propagating the Gospel, Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the infant Church. But in the midst of his career, he was suddenly con-

Conversion of St. Paul.

^b Milner's Church History, chap. i.

CENT.
I. verted to the faith of Christ, and commissioned as his Apostle to the Gentiles. Independently of the miraculous gifts with which this extraordinary man was endowed, his natural talents were of the highest order, and he had made considerable attainments both in Hebrew and Grecian learning. He possessed also a spirit of indefatigable labour, and of invincible fortitude and patience, which admirably qualified him for the arduous office to which he was called. To the eminent abilities and exertions of this great Apostle must accordingly be attributed much of the unparalleled success of the Gospel at its first publication.

About this time, the Churches throughout Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed an interval of repose from the persecution of the Jews, and were in consequence considerably strengthened and enlarged. At this favourable conjuncture, Saint Peter leaving Jerusalem, where, with the rest of the Apostles, he had hitherto remained, travelled through all quarters of Palestine, confirming the disciples, and particularly visited Lydda, Saron, and Joppa, the inhabitants of which places almost universally received the Gospel ^c.

Admission of
the Gentiles
into the
Christian
Church.

Hitherto Christianity had been preached to the Jews alone; but the time was now arrived for the full discovery of the divine purpose to extend the knowledge of it to the Gentiles. This important event took place at Cæsarea, the residence of the Roman Governor, about seven years after the ascension of our Lord. During the transactions which have been just related, some further circumstances took place respecting the extension of Christianity. When the Disciples, who were driven from Jerusalem on the death of St. Stephen, had passed through Judæa and Samaria, they

^c Acts ix. 35.

travelled

travelled as far as Phœnice, Cyprus, and Antioch, as yet confining their labours to the Jews. At length, however, some of them, on their arrival at Antioch, addressed themselves to the Greek^d inhabitants of that city, and a great number of them were in consequence converted to the faith. Intelligence of this event being communicated to the Church at Jerusalem, the Apostles immediately sent Barnabas, to confirm the work of their conversion; who, finding so promising a field for Apostolical labours, went to Tarsus, and brought back with him the converted Saul. At Antioch they continued a year, forming and establishing the first Christian Church among the heathen; and in this city the Disciples were first denominated *Christians*.

CENT.
I.

Saul and Barnabas at Antioch.

The subsequent history in the Acts of the Apostles is almost exclusively confined to the travels of St. Paul and his fellow-labourers, which are so universally known, that it would be superfluous to enter into any minute detail of them. It may be sufficient to observe in the words of the Apostle himself, that “from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, he fully preached the Gospel of Christ.” This comprehensive circuit included Syria, Phœnicia, the rich and populous provinces of Asia Minor, and of Macedonia and Greece; in which extensive districts, the cities of Antioch, Lystra, and Derbe, of Thessalonica and Philippi, of Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus, particularly witnessed his zeal and activity in the Christian cause. Nor were these the boundaries of his ministry. Rome itself, and, according to Clement and others^e, the countries west of Italy, including Spain, and possibly the shores of Gaul and Britain, were visited by this great

Travels of St. Paul.

^d i. e. Heathens. See the various reading.

^e Wells's Historical Geography of the Old and New Testament, vol. ii. p. 298.

Apostle,

CENT. I. Apostle, till his various labours in the service of Christ were at length terminated by his martyrdom near Rome in the year 64 or 65.

Travels of
the other
Apostles.

Of the travels of the rest of the Apostles, and of the further propagation of Christianity during the remainder of the first century, but very short and imperfect accounts remain. St. Peter was more particularly successful amongst his countrymen the Jews. The last historical notice in Scripture of this zealous Apostle presents him to us at Antioch. After this, he was probably engaged in preaching chiefly to the Jews of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia proper, and Bithynia, to whom his first Epistle is addressed; and about the year 63, he is supposed to have left those provinces, and to have proceeded to Rome^f; where he is reported to have received the crown of martyrdom in the same year with his illustrious fellow-apostle St. Paul.

St. John is said to have continued in Palestine till near the commencement of the Jewish war, (A. D. 66.) at which eventful period he quitted that devoted country, and travelled into Asia. He fixed his residence at Ephesus; which celebrated city and the neighbouring territory were the great scene of his ministry during the remainder of his long extended life.

St. Matthew, according to Socrates^g, preached in the Asiatic Ethiopia. Egypt, according to Eusebius and St. Jerome, was visited by St. Mark, who founded a Church at Alexandria. The extensive field which is assigned to St. Thomas by Origen and Sophronius is Parthia, Media, Carmania, Bactriana, and the neighbouring nations. Socrates records St. Andrew to have preached in Scythia, and St. Bartholomew in India.

^f Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii.

^g Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 19.

Besides

Besides the districts which are thus assigned by ecclesiastical tradition to these Apostles, there are others, in which Christian Churches were unquestionably planted, and which are incidentally mentioned in Scripture; as Cyrene and its neighbourhood, and the whole northern coast of Africa; Cyprus, Crete, and the islands of the Ægean sea. It is, however, impossible to trace with accuracy the travels of the Apostles and their various fellow-labourers in the great work of propagating Christianity throughout the world.

Yet it is evident from the narrative of St. Luke, from the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter, from the testimony of ecclesiastical writers, and occasionally even of heathen authors themselves^h, that the Gospel was preached in almost every quarter of the Roman empire, and even far beyond its boundaries, within the space of thirty years after our Lord's ascension; and that in most of those parts great numbers were "daily added to the Churchⁱ."

Before we pursue the history of its progress during the subsequent ages, it may not, however, be irrelevant to the design of this brief sketch of the subject, to advert to the *causes* of the rapid extension of the Gospel which has been just exhibited, and to the *effects* which it produced in the world. Various have been the attempts of Antichristian writers to account for the extraordinary propagation of Christianity at this period from the operation of

^h See particularly Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. C. Plin. Trajano Imp. lib. x. Ep. 97. with Paley's remarks on those passages, Evid. vol. ii. p. 234.

ⁱ Col. i. 6, 23. The extraordinary progress of Christianity during the first century is admirably described by Bishop Pearson, in his Exposition of the Creed, Art. *Christ*; and by Dr. Paley, Evidences, vol. ii. p. 220—227. See also note B.

CENT. I. causes merely human. One ingenious and laboured effort of this kind was particularly made by a late celebrated historian^k, whose unhappy prejudices against the religion of Christ led him to attribute its rapid success to certain causes, which he represented as being wholly unconnected with any divine interposition.

It cannot be denied, that the wisdom of Providence had ordained the introduction of Christianity at a period, when the state of the world was peculiarly favourable to its successful propagation; and to these we have already briefly adverted. Yet, notwithstanding the moral necessities of mankind, and the extent, union, and peace of the Roman empire, Christianity had to contend with difficulties, which no mere human support could have enabled it to surmount. It was directly opposed to the most inveterate prejudices of the Jews, and to the prevailing principles, customs, and inclinations of the Gentiles. Its mysterious and humiliating doctrines were calculated to offend the pride of the philosopher; the simplicity of its worship but ill accorded with the multiplied superstitions of the vulgar; and the purity and strictness of its moral precepts were alike irreconcilable to the vicious dispositions and practices of all. In addition to these difficulties, Christianity had to encounter, both among Jews and Gentiles, the machinations of interested priests, and the jealous and oppressive policy of princes and magistrates; and actually sustained a series of persecutions from its first introduction to its establishment as the religion of the Roman empire, which were alone sufficient to have overwhelmed and extinguished a system not

^k Hist. of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. i. chap. 15. For satisfactory replies to the reasonings and insinuations of the sceptical historian, see the Bishop of Llandaff's Apology for Christianity, and the Tracts of Lord Hailes and Mr. Milner.

founded in truth, and supported only by human wisdom and power. CENT.
I.

That Christianity, as is universally acknowledged, should triumph over these accumulated difficulties, and, within the first century after its introduction, become widely diffused, not only in rude and barbarous countries, but among the most civilized and polished nations of the world, that is, under circumstances which must have proved fatal to the most artful imposture, is a fact unparalleled in the history of mankind, and can only be satisfactorily accounted for on the ground of its divine origin, and of some supernatural interposition in its favour. And such interposition, according to the express promise of their divine Master, actually accompanied the ministry of the Apostles; "They went forth and "preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following¹." The various miraculous gifts which they publicly exercised, and communicated to others, irresistibly engaged the attention of mankind, and indisputably confirmed the divine origin and truth of their doctrine. But, besides these more extraordinary and sensible attestations to their ministry, there were both in their instructions themselves, and in the manner in which they were conveyed, and in their general dispositions and conduct, as real, though not as striking, marks of divine agency and guidance. They displayed in the most simple yet forcible manner the intrinsic excellence of Christianity, the perfection of its morality, the purity and strength of its motives, the awful nature of its punishments, and the sublimity of its rewards. They were, above all, *examples* in their own persons of the truths which they laboured to inculcate upon others, exhibiting in their uniform practice the sublimest virtues of our holy religion.

¹ Mark xvi. 20.

CENT. I. Nor was the result of their endeavours to instruct and reform mankind less eminently successful than might justly be expected from the operation of such powerful causes. The change which was gradually effected in the moral condition of the world by the labours of the first preachers of Christianity, is universally allowed to have been, in the highest degree, beneficial and important. The state of superstition and vice, in which both Jews and Gentiles were involved previous to the introduction of Christianity, has been already mentioned; but a striking difference immediately appears wherever either were converted to that heavenly religion. The accounts which may be derived from the Acts of the Apostles and from the Epistles of St. Paul, confirmed as they are incidentally by the testimony of an impartial witness^m, exhibit the most pleasing and satisfactory view of the pure and elevated principles, dispositions, and manners of the primitive Christians. The influence of Christianity was, it is true, at first confined to individuals, and chiefly to the middle and lower classes of society. But as the numbers of the Disciples are uniformly represented to have borne, at an early period, no inconsiderable proportion to the rest of the people, and were every where daily increasing, the beneficial consequences of their principles and conduct were felt in *public* as well as in private life. Many immoral and cruel practices were discontinued, and at length abolished; the condition of the lower orders of the people was gradually ameliorated, and the general

^m See the letter of Pliny already referred to, in which the blamelessness and purity of character which distinguished the first disciples of Christ are distinctly acknowledged. The ancient Apologists, also, of the Church constantly appeal to their virtuous conduct, and to the beneficial effects of Christianity, as an evidence in their favour, with a confidence which nothing but a consciousness of its truth could have inspired.

state of the Roman empire became in the course of a few centuries visibly and essentially improved ⁿ. CENT.
I.

But to resume our account of the progress of Christianity. CENT.
II.
During *the second century* the boundaries of the Christian Church were considerably enlarged. It is, indeed, by no means easy to determine, with any degree of certainty, the different countries into which the Gospel was first introduced in this age. Justin the martyr, who wrote about the year 106 after the ascension of our Lord, speaks of its extensive propagation in these remarkable words: “There is not a nation, either of Greek or Barbarian, or “of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes and live “in tents, amongst whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe by the name of “the crucified Jesus^o.” These expressions of the eloquent Father may be admitted to be somewhat general and declamatory; yet it is obvious, that his description must, in a considerable degree, have corresponded with the truth. Undoubted testimonies remain of the existence of Christianity in this century in Germany, Spain, Gaul, and Britain. It is possible, as we have already seen, that the light of the Gospel might have dawned on the Transalpine Gaul before the conclusion of the Apostolic age; but the establishment of Christian Churches in that part of Europe cannot be satisfactorily ascertained before the second century P. At that period, Po-

Progress during the second century in Germany, Spain, Gaul, and Britain.

^a See, on the subject of the beneficial influence of Christianity, Paley’s Evidences, vol. ii. chap. 7. and the Bishop of London’s late Essay. See also Mr. Nares’s Sermon on the Translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental Languages, note 17.

^o Dial. cum Tryph.

^p See note C. Mosheim supposes, that some preachers in the first ages might have laboured in Gaul, but with little success. And with this opinion Tillemont

CENT. II. thinus, in concert with Irenæus and others from Asia, laboured so successfully in Gaul, that Churches were founded at Lyons and Vienne. From Gaul Christianity appears to have passed into that part of Germany which was subject to the Romans, and from thence into our own country. By Tertullian also it is related, that the Moors and Gætulians of Africa, several nations inhabiting the borders of Spain, various provinces of France, and parts of Britain inaccessible to the Romans, and also the Sarmatians, Daci, Germans, and Scythians, received the Gospel in this age. Towards the end of the century, Pantæus, a philosopher of Alexandria, is said by Eusebius^r to have preached in India, and to have found Christians in that country. But although there is reason to believe that India had already partially received the light of Christianity, it is more probably supposed, that the labours of Pantæus were directed to certain Jews of Arabia Felix, who had been previously instructed by St. Bartholomew the Apostle^s.

Causés. *The same causes*, which produced the extraordinary and rapid success of Christianity in the first century, contributed to its progress in the second. The gift of tongues was, indeed, beginning to be withdrawn from the preachers of the Gospel; but other miraculous powers were undoubtedly continued during this century;

nearly agrees. See Mosheim. Comment. de Rebus Christianis ante Constantinum, sect. 3. The late reception of Christianity in Gaul is argued from Sulp. Sev. lib. ii. cap. 32. “Ac tum primum inter Gallias martyria visa; serius trans Alpes “religione Dei fuscepta.” These were the martyrs of Lyons.

^s Ad Jud. c. 7.

^r Hist. Eccl. lib. v. cap. 10.

^s See Mosheim, cent. ii. part 1. Other ecclesiastical writers, however, interpret this account of Eusebius as literally referring to India, particularly Jortin and Milner.

though,

though, as the number of Christian Churches increased, they were gradually diminished. In addition to these divine and supernatural causes of the propagation of Christianity, one of a more ordinary nature may be mentioned, as having contributed materially to this important effect. This was *the translation of the New Testament* into different languages, more especially into the Latin, which was now more universally known than any other. Of the Latin versions, that which has been distinguished by the name of the Italic^t was the most celebrated, and was followed by the Syriac, the Egyptian, and the Ethiopic, the dates of which cannot, however, be accurately ascertained.

CENT.
II.

In the third century the progress of Christianity in the world was very considerable, though, with respect to the particular countries into which it was introduced, the same degree of uncertainty prevails as was noticed in the second. The celebrated Origen, having been invited from Alexandria by an Arabian prince, succeeded in converting a tribe of wandering Arabs to the Christian faith^u. The fierce and warlike nation of the Goths, who, inhabiting the countries of Moesia and Thrace, made perpetual incursions into the neighbouring provinces, and some likewise of the adjoining tribes of Sarmatia, received the knowledge of the Gospel by means of several Bishops, who were either sent thither from Asia, or had become their captives. These venerable teachers, by the miraculous powers which they exercised, and by the sanctity of their lives, became the instruments of converting great numbers, and, in process of time, of softening and civilizing this rude and barbarous people.

Conversion
of the Goths.

^t The origin of this denomination is uncertain. See, however, some observations upon it in the Christian Observer for May 1807, p. 282.

^u Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. cap. 19. p. 221.

C E N T. In France, during the reign of the Emperor Decius^x, and in the
 III. midst of his persecution, the Christian Churches, which had hitherto been chiefly confined to the neighbourhood of Lyons and
 Progreſs in France. Vienne, were conſiderably increaſed. By the labours of many pious and zealous men, amongſt whom Saturninus, the firſt Biſhop of Toulouſe, was particularly diſtinguiſhed, Churches were founded at Paris, Tours, Arles, Narbonne, and in ſeveral other places. From theſe ſources, the knowledge of the Goſpel ſpread in a ſhort time through the whole country. In the courſe of this century, Chriſtianity flouriſhed in Germany, particularly in thoſe parts of it which border upon France. Maternus, Clemens, and others, founded, in particular, the Churches of Cologne, Treves, and Metz. No poſitive account has been tranſmitted reſpecting the progreſs
 In the Britiſh of Chriſtianity in the Britiſh iſles during the third century. The iſles. hiſtorians of Scotland contend, indeed, that the Goſpel then firſt viſited that country; and there is reaſon to believe that their account may be true y.

Causes. In this century, the clemency and mildneſs of ſeveral of the Roman emperors, and the encouragement which ſome of them gave to Chriſtianity, tended materially to augment its influence; and though the number of miracles was conſiderably diminiſhed, ſome extraordinary powers were ſtill continued to the Church. The piety and charity of the Chriſtian diſciples continued alſo to excite the notice and admiration of the heathen; and the zealous labours of Origen and others in the tranſlation and diſperſion of the New Teſtament, and in the compoſition of different works in the defence and illuſtration of Chriſtianity, con-

^x A. D. 250.

^y See Uſher and Stillingfleet, *Antiq. et Orig. Eccl. Brit.*

tributed to increase the number of Christians, and to extend the boundaries of the Church. CENT.
III.

Hitherto Christianity had been established and propagated in the world, not only independently of all human contrivance and support, but in opposition to every species of worldly authority. During the long course of three hundred years, the Church had been exposed to the malice and power of its numerous and formidable enemies. It had sustained the fiery trial of ten persecutions, and the various efforts which had been made to extinguish or depress it. But, instead of sinking under the weight of these calamities, the numbers of the disciples were every where multiplied, and the limits of Christianity were progressively enlarged. Early, however, in *the fourth century* a different scene began to be presented. About the year 312, Constantine the Great, having defeated the tyrant Maxentius, granted to the Christians full liberty to live according to their own institutions; and soon afterwards himself embraced the Christian religion. Various reasons might concur in producing this important event. The Christians were, at this period, the most powerful, though not the most numerous party. Arnobius^z, who wrote immediately before Constantine's accession to the imperial throne, speaks of the whole world as filled with the doctrine of Christ, of an innumerable body of Christians in distant provinces, and of their progressive increase in all countries. The evident tendency of Christianity to promote the stability of government, by enforcing the obedience of the people, and the general practice of virtue, doubtless, also, contributed to increase this favourable impression on the mind of Constantine. And, what is more to his honour, it is probable, that, in process of time,

Conversion of
Constantine
the Great.

^z Arnob. in Gentes, lib. i.

C E N T. he acquired more extensive views of the excellence and importance
IV. of the Christian religion, and gradually arrived at an entire conviction of its divine origin. About the year 324, when, in consequence of the defeat and death of Licinius, he remained sole lord of the Roman empire, Constantine openly avowed his opposition to Paganism. From that period, he earnestly exhorted all his subjects to embrace the Gospel; and, at length, towards the close of his reign, zealously employed the resources of his genius, the authority of his laws, and the influence of his liberality, to complete the destruction of the Pagan superstitions, and to establish Christianity in every part of the empire.

Zeal of Constantine and some of his successors.

The sons of Constantine imitated the zeal of their father, as did all his successors in this century, with the exception of the apostate Julian, whose insidious attempts to restore the rites of Paganism occasioned a short interruption to the triumphant progress of Christianity. These were, however, speedily counterbalanced by the renewed efforts of Jovian, and the succeeding emperors, to the time of Theodosius the Great^a. The activity and determination of this illustrious prince were exerted in the most effectual manner, in the extirpation of Pagan idolatry and superstition, and in the establishment and advancement of Christianity; so that towards the close of this century the religion of the Gentiles seemed to be fast tending towards neglect and extinction^b. The severe edicts, and the violent means which were otherwise employed to effect this important purpose, must unquestionably be condemned. But it must be remembered, that Christianity cannot be justly chargeable with the errors of its friends, and that the

^a A. D. 379.

^b The language of St. Jerome strongly conveys this idea. “Solitudinem patitur et in urbe gentilitas. Dii quondam nationum, cum bubonibus et noctuis, in solis culminibus remanserunt.” Jer. ad Lect. Ep. 57.

wife and tolerant maxims which are now so generally acknowledged, were not then sufficiently known, or were erroneously deemed inapplicable to the gross superstition of the Gentiles. But if such were the zeal of Constantine and his successors in the cause of Christianity, we cannot be surprised at its successful extension amongst many barbarous and uncivilized nations.

C E N T.
IV.

During this century, the province of Armenia, which had probably been, in some measure, visited with the light of Christianity at its first rise, became completely illuminated. This change was chiefly produced by the labours of Gregory, commonly called the *Enlightener*. In Persia also, which is supposed to have contained many Christians even in the first and second centuries, the Gospel was during the present more extensively propagated.

Progress of
Christianity
in Armenia.

Persia.

Towards the middle of this century^c, Frumentius, an inhabitant of Egypt, carried the knowledge of Christianity to a people of Ethiopia, or Abyssinia, whose capital was Auxumis. He baptized their king, together with several persons of the highest rank in his court; and, returning into Egypt, was consecrated by St. Athanasius the first Bishop of that country, where he afterwards preached with great success. The Church thus founded in Abyssinia continues to this day, and still considers herself as a daughter of Alexandria.

Abyssinia.

Christianity was introduced into the province of Iberia, between the Euxine and the Caspian seas, now called Georgia, by means of a female captive, during the reign of Constantine, whose pious

Iberia.

^c A. D. 333.

C E N T. and, as it is asserted^d, miraculous endowments so deeply impressed
IV. the king and queen, that they abandoned idolatry, and sent to Constantinople for proper persons to instruct them and their subjects in the knowledge of the Christian religion.

The Homeritæ.

Soon after the death of Constantine, his son Constantius sent an embassy to a people called Homeritæ, supposed to have been the ancient Sabæans, and the posterity of Abraham by Keturah, dwelling in Arabia Felix. One of the principal ambassadors was Theophilus, an Indian, who in his youth had been sent as an hostage to Constantine from the inhabitants of the island Diu, and settling at Rome led a monastic life, and obtained great reputation for sanctity. By this missionary the Gospel was preached to the Homeritæ; the king and many of the people were converted, and Christianity was established in their country. After this, Theophilus went to Diu, and in his way passed through many regions of India, where the Gospel was already received, and where he rectified some irregularities in practice. Both Theophilus, however, and these Indian Christians, were Arians^e.

Among the Goths.

During the reign of the Emperor Valens, a large body of the Goths, who had remained attached to their ancient superstitions, notwithstanding the previous conversion of some of their countrymen, were permitted by that prince to pass the Danube, and to inhabit Dacia, Mœsia, and Thrace, on condition of living subject to the Roman laws, and of embracing Christianity: this condition was accordingly accepted by their king Fritigern. The cele-

^d By Rufinus, and after him by Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. See Jortin, Eccl. Remarks, vol. ii. 73.

^e Jortin, vol. ii.

brated Ulphilas, Bishop of those Goths who dwelt in Mœsia, contributed greatly to their improvement, by *translating the four Gospels* into the Gothic language. CENT.
IV.

Notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the Christian Bishops in the European provinces of the empire, great numbers of Pagans still remained. In Gaul, however, the labours of the venerable Martin of Tours were so successful in the destruction of idolatry and superstition, and the propagation of Christianity, that he justly acquired the honourable title of *the Apostle of the Gauls*. In Gaul.

The authority and the examples of Constantine and his imperial successors probably tended greatly to the progress of the Christian religion during this century. But it is, at the same time, undeniable, that the *indefatigable zeal of the Bishops*, and other pious men, the *sanctity of their lives*, the *intrinsic excellence of Christianity*, the *various translations* of the sacred writings, and the supernatural powers which, though greatly diminished, probably still existed, in some measure, in the Church, must be allowed to have most materially contributed to this extraordinary success^f. Causes.

At the beginning of the *fifth century* the Roman empire was divided into two distinct sovereignties, under the dominion of Arcadius in the East, and of Honorius in the West. The confusions and calamities which about this period attended the incursions of the Goths, the temporary possession of Italy by Odoacer, and the subsequent establishment of the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, were undoubtedly prejudicial to the progress of Christianity. CENT.
V.

The zeal of the Christian emperors, more especially of those who reigned Progress of
Christianity.

^f See note D.

CENT. V. reigned in the East, was, notwithstanding, successfully exerted in extirpating the remains of the Gentile superstitions, and the Church continued daily to gain ground on the idolatrous nations in the empire. In the East, the inhabitants of Mount Libanus and Antilibanus were induced, by the persuasions of Simeon the Stylite, to embrace the Christian religion. By his influence, also, it was introduced into a certain district of the Arabians.

Indians on
the coast of
Malabar.

About the middle of this century, the Indians on the coast of Malabar were converted to Christianity by the Syrian Mar-Thomas, a Nestorian, who has been confounded by the Portuguese with the Apostle St. Thomas^s. Some ecclesiastical writers, indeed, place the arrival of this missionary in India during the *seventh* century. But it is, perhaps, more correct to refer this latter event to the confirmation of the Church already in a flourishing state, by the labours of two other Syrians, Mar-Sapor and Mar-Perosis, during that century^h. To these instances of the progress of Christianity in the East, may be added the conversion of a considerable number of Jews in the island of Crete, who had been previously deceived by the pretensions of the impostor Moses Cretensis. In the West, the German nations, who had destroyed that division of the empire, gradually embraced the religion of the conquered people. Some of them had been converted to the Christian faith before their incursions upon the empire; and such, amongst others, was the case of the Goths. It is, however, uncertain at what time, and by whose labours, the Vandals, Sueves, and Alans

German na-
tions.

^s See Asiatic Researches, vol. vii. Account of the St. Thomé Christians on the coast of Malabar, by F. Wiedé, Esq. These Christians will again be noticed in a subsequent part of this work.

^h See note E.

were evangelized. The Burgundians, who inhabited the banks of the Rhine, and who passed from thence into Gaul, received the Gospel, hoping to be preserved by its divine Author from the ravages of the Huns. And, in general, these fierce and barbarous nations were induced to embrace the Christian religion by the desire of living in greater security amidst a people who, for the most part, professed it; and from a persuasion that the doctrine of the majority must be the best.

C E N T.
V.

It was on similar principles that Clovis, king of the Salii, a nation of the Franks, whose kingdom he founded in Gaul, became a convert to Christianity, after a battle with the Alemanni in the year 496, in which he had implored the assistance of Christ. This prince, proving victorious, was baptized at Rheims by Remigius, Bishop of that city; and the example of the king was immediately followed by the baptism of three thousand of his subjects. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that there was probably but little of conviction or sincerity in either. In Britain, Christianity was almost extinguished by the predatory incursions of the Scots and Picts, and, afterwards, by the persecutions of the Saxons. The Christian faith was, however, planted in Ireland by Palladius, and after him by Succathus, an inhabitant of Scotland, whose name was changed to Patrick by Celestine the Roman Pontiff, from whom both these missions had proceeded. The latter of these pious and zealous preachers, who has been styled *the Apostle of the Irish*, arrived in Ireland in the year 432, and was so successful in his labours, that great numbers of the barbarous natives were converted to Christianity; and in the year 472, he founded the Archbishopric of Armagh.

The sixth century was distinguished by some further advances
of

C E N T. VI. of Christianity both in the East and West. The Bishops of Constantinople, under the influence and protection of the Grecian emperors, succeeded in converting some barbarous nations, inhabiting

The Abasgi
and other na-
tions.

the coasts of the Euxine sea, amongst whom were the Abasgi, whose country lay between the shores of that sea and Mount Caucasus. The Heruli, who dwelt beyond the Danube, the Alani, Lani, and Zani, together with other uncivilized nations whose precise situation cannot now be accurately ascertained, were converted about the same time, during the reign of Justinian. In the West, Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, was remarkably successful in Gaul, where the example of Clovis continued to be followed by great numbers of his subjects.

Britain.

In Britain, the progress of Christianity was accelerated during this century by several favourable circumstances. By the pious efforts of Bertha, wife of Ethelbert, king of Kent, one of the most considerable of the Saxon monarchs, the mind of the king became gradually well disposed towards the Christian religion. At this auspicious period, A. D. 596, the Roman Pontiff, Gregory the Great, sent into Britain forty Benedictine monks, at the head of whom he placed Augustin, prior of the monastery of St. Andrew at Rome. In conjunction with the queen, this zealous missionary succeeded in converting Ethelbert, together with the greater part of the inhabitants of Kent, and laid anew the foundations of the British Church.

In Scotland, the labours of Columban, an Irish monk, were attended with success; and in Germany, the Bohemians, the Thuringians, and the Boii, are said to have abandoned their ancient superstitions, and to have embraced the Christian religion. But this is a fact, which is by no means undisputed.

Italy

Italy about the middle of this century sustained an entire revolution, by the destruction of the kingdom of the Ostrogoths under Narfes, the general of Justinian. But the imperial authority was again overthrown two years afterwards by the Lombards, who, with several other German nations, issued from Pannonia, and erected a new kingdom at Ticinum. During several years, the Christians in Italy were severely persecuted by these new invaders. But in the year 587, Authasis, the third monarch of the Lombards, embraced Christianity as professed by the Arians, and his successor Agilulf adopted the tenets of the Nicene Catholics.

CENT.
VI.

The cause, which principally contributed to the conversion of so many barbarous nations, was unquestionably *the authority of their princes*, rather than the force of argument or conviction. This appears from the little effect which was produced by the change of their religion on the conduct of the barbarians. It must, indeed, be confessed, that the knowledge which they at first obtained of the doctrine of Christ was extremely superficial and imperfect. In some it may, perhaps, reasonably be presumed, that the principles of Christianity were more deeply rooted, and were productive of salutary effects. But it is to be feared, that the majority were Christians only in name. It should, however, at the same time be remembered, that even their slight acquaintance with our holy religion was productive of *some beneficial change*, and that a foundation was laid in their nominal subjection to Christianity for their gradual civilization, and moral improvement.

In the next century, Christianity was propagated with much zeal and success by the Nestorians, who dwelt in Syria, Persia, and India, among the fierce and barbarous nations who lived in the remotest

CENT.
VII.

CENT. VII. remotest borders and deserts of Asia. By the labours of this sect, the knowledge of the Gospel was, about the year 637, extended to the remote empire of China, the northern parts of which are said to have abounded with Christians before this centuryⁱ.

Christianity introduced into China.

Progress in Britain.

In Germany and Switzerland.

In the West, Augustin laboured to enlarge the boundaries of the Church; and by his efforts, and those of his brethren, the six Anglo-Saxon kings, who had hitherto remained in their Pagan state, were converted, and Christianity was at length universally embraced throughout Britain. Many of the British, Scotch, and Irish ecclesiastics travelled among the Batavian, Belgic, and German nations, and propagated Christianity among them. In these labours, Columban, an Irish monk, St. Gal, one of his companions, St. Kilian, from Scotland, and the celebrated Willebrod, an Anglo-Saxon, with eleven of his countrymen, particularly distinguished themselves; Columban, among the Suevi, the Boii, the Franks, and other German nations; St. Gal, among the Helvetii, in the neighbourhood of the lakes of Zurich and Constance; St. Kilian, among the eastern Franks near Wurzburg; and Willebrod, among the Frieslanders, great numbers of whom embraced the Christian faith, in consequence of the pious exertions of these laborious missionaries. Willebrod was ordained Bishop of Wilfeshurg, now Utrecht, by the Roman Prelate, and laboured in his diocese till his death; while his associates spread the light of divine truth through Westphalia and the neighbouring countries. During this century, according to some authors, Bavaria received the Gospel, by the ministry of Robert, Bishop of Worms.

ⁱ In proof of this assertion, Mosheim and his learned translator refer to various authors.

But amidst these numerous accessions to the Christian Church in the West, a formidable enemy suddenly appeared in the East, by whose successful tyranny Christianity began to be depressed, and at length became totally extinguished in several of its most extensive provinces. This was the celebrated Arabian impostor, Mohammed; who about the year 612, amidst the corruptions and dissensions of the Eastern Church, undertook the bold project of subverting the Christian religion and the Roman power; and who within the space of twenty years actually succeeded, by artifice, and by the force of arms, in imposing both his doctrine and his authority on multitudes in Arabia and several adjacent countries. After the death of Mohammed, in the year 632, his followers, animated by a spirit of fanatical zeal and fury, and assisted by the Nestorian Christians, extended their conquests to Persia, Mesopotamia, Chaldæa, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the whole extent of the northern coast of Africa, as far as the Atlantic ocean. In the year 714^k, the Saracens crossed the sea which separates Spain from Africa, defeated the army of the Spanish Goths, overturned the empire of the Visigoths, and took possession of all the maritime coasts of Gaul, from the Pyrenean mountains to the Rhone; whence they made frequent incursions, and committed the most destructive ravages in the neighbouring countries. The rapid progress of these formidable invaders was, at length, checked by the celebrated Charles Martel, who gained a signal victory over them near Tours, in the year 732. During these destructive incursions of the Saracens, Christianity, in those countries which were the seat of their devastations, was necessarily obstructed in its progress, and in some places it was even altogether extir-

CENT.
VII.Appearance
of Moham-
med.Progress of
his followers.

^k To avoid breaking the thread of the narration, the Author has here pursued the history of the Saracenic conquests through the following century.

CENT. VII. patcd. These, however, were not the only calamities which the Church suffered during these disastrous times. About the middle of the eighth century, the Turks, the descendants of a tribe of Tartars, rushed from the inaccessible wilds of Mount Caucasus, overran Colchis, Iberia, and Albania, pursued their rapid course from thence into Armenia, and, after having subdued the Saracens, turned their victorious arms against the Greeks; whom, in process of time, they reduced under their dominion. During the last twenty years of this century, the provinces of Asia Minor, which had been the splendid scene of the first Christian triumphs, were ravaged by the impious arms of the Caliphs, and the inhabitants oppressed in the most barbarous manner.

CENT. VIII. While, however, the success of the Mohammedan arms was thus subjecting so large a part of the Eastern empire, and obscuring, as far as their influence extended, the glory of the Christian Church, the Nestorians of Chaldæa carried the faith of the Gospel, such as they professed, to the Scythians, or Tartars, who were seated within the limits of Mount Imaus¹.

Progress of
Christianity
in Tartary.

In Germany. In Europe, several unenlightened nations were, during the *eighth century*, brought to the knowledge of Christianity. The Germans, who, with the exception of the Bavarians, the East Frieslanders, and a few other nations, had hitherto resisted every attempt to instruct them, were at length converted to the faith of Christ, by Winfrid, an English Benedictine monk, and afterwards known by the name of *Boniface*. By the indefatigable exertions of this celebrated missionary, the Christian re-

¹ This expression comprehends Turkistan and Mongul, the Usbeck, Kalmuck, and Nagaian Tartary, which were peopled by the Bactrians, Sogdians, Gandari, Sacæ, and Massagetes.

ligion was successfully propagated throughout Friesland, Hesse, CENT. VIII. Thuringia, and other districts of Germany. During the same period, Corbinian, a French Benedictine monk, laboured assiduously amongst the Bavarians. Rumold, a native either of England or Ireland, travelled into Lower Germany and Brabant, and diffused the truths of Christianity in the neighbourhood of Mechlin. Firmin, a Gaul by birth, preached in Alsace, Bavaria, and Switzerland. Liefuvin, a Briton, laboured with the most ardent zeal, though with but little success, to convert the Belgæ and other neighbouring nations; whilst Willebrod, and others, persevered in the work which they had so happily begun in the preceding century. To the account of the accessions to the Christian Church during this century, must finally be added the conversion of the Saxons, a numerous and formidable people, who inhabited a considerable part of Germany, and of the Huns in Pannonia, by the warlike zeal of Charlemagne. The violent methods, which were used by this great prince for the accomplishment of his design, destroy both the merit and genuineness of his success, although the ultimate effect of it undoubtedly tended to the propagation of Christianity.

We are now advancing into those dark and superstitious ages, CENT. IX. in which the light of Christianity could scarcely be distinguished, even in the countries which already nominally possessed it. About the middle, however, of *the ninth century*, Cyril and Methodius, Progress of Christianity amongst the two Greek monks, were the instruments of converting the Mœ- Mosians. sians, Bulgarians, and Chazari, to the Christian faith. Their labours were afterwards extended to the Bohemians and Moravians, Bohemians. at the request of the princes of those nations, who, with many of their subjects, submitted to the rite of baptism.

C E N T. IX. About the year 867, under the reign of the Emperor Basilus the Macedonian, the Slavonians, Arentani, and others, inhabitants of Dalmatia, sent an embassy to Constantinople, declaring their resolution of submitting to the Grecian empire, and of embracing the Christian religion; and requesting to be supplied with suitable teachers. Their request was granted, and those provinces were included within the pale of the Church.

In Russia. The fierce and barbarous nation of the Russians, inhabitants of the Ukraine, embraced the Gospel under the reign of the same emperor. The observations, however, which were made at the close of the sixth century, respecting the nature of such conversions as have been just related, must constantly be borne in mind. In the case of numbers of individuals, the profession of Christianity was, no doubt, sincere; but as to the great body of the people, it was probably merely formal.

Jutland. In the course of this century, Christianity began to be preached in the frozen regions of Scandinavia^m, and on the shores of the Baltic, which had hitherto been involved in the grossest Pagan darkness. In the year 826, Harold, king of Jutland, being expelled from his dominions, implored the protection of the Emperor Lewis, the son and successor of Charlemagne. That prince promised him his assistance, on condition that he would embrace Christianity, and permit the ministers of that religion to preach in his dominions. To this the Danish prince consented. He was accordingly baptized, and returned to his own country, attended by two eminently pious ecclesiastics, Aufcarius and Aubert, monks of

^m This term commonly includes the three kingdoms of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway.

Corbie. These venerable missionaries laboured with remarkable CENT.
IX. success during two years, in converting the rude inhabitants of Cimbria and Jutland. On the death of his companion, the zealous and indefatigable Aufcarius went into Sweden, A. D. 828 ; where Sweden. his exertions were also crowned with success. After having been raised, in the year 831, to the Archbishopric of Hamburg, and of the whole North, to which charge the superintendence of the Church of Bremen was afterwards added, this admirable Christian missionary spent the remainder of his life in travelling frequently amongst the Danes, Cimbrians, and Swedes, to form new Churches, to confirm and establish those which had been already planted, and otherwise to promote the cause of Christianity. He continued in the midst of these arduous and dangerous enterprises till his death in the year 865. Rembert, his successor in the superintendence of the Church of Bremen, began, towards the close of this century, to preach to the inhabitants of Brandenburg, and made some progress towards their conversion.

Whilst these accessions to the Christian Church were making in Progress of
the Saracens. the north of Europe, the Saracens, who were already masters of nearly the whole of Asia, extended their conquests to the extremities of India, and subjected the greatest part of Africa, as then known, to their dominion. Sardinia also, and Sicily, submitted to their yoke ; and towards the conclusion of the century, they spread terror even to the very gates of Rome. These desolating incursions not only obstructed the propagation of Christianity, but produced in great numbers of Christians a deplorable apostasy from the faith.

The European Christians suffered almost equally from the ravages of the Pagan Normans from the coasts of the Baltic ; who The Nor-
mans. not

CENT.
IX. not only infested the shores and islands of the German ocean, but at length broke into Germany, Britain, Friesland, Gaul, Spain, and Italy, and forcibly seated themselves in various provinces of those kingdoms. By degrees, however, these savage invaders became civilized by their settlement among Christian nations, and were gradually persuaded to embrace the religion of the Gospel.

CENT.
X. In *the tenth century*, the Christian Church presented a deplorable scene of ignorance, superstition, and immorality. Amidst the darkness, however, which universally prevailed, some rays of light occasionally appear. The Nestorians of Chaldæa, whose zeal, notwithstanding their errors, is deserving of commendation, extended the knowledge of Christianity beyond Mount Imaus, to Tartary, properly so called, whose inhabitants had hitherto remained ignorant and uncivilized. The same successful missionaries afterwards introduced it amongst the powerful nation of the Turks, or Tartars, which was denominated Karit, and bordered on the northern part of China. The Hungarians and Avari had received some imperfect ideas of Christianity during the reign of Charlemagne; but, on his decease, they relapsed into idolatry, and the Christian religion was almost extinguished amongst them.

Progress in
Tartary.

On the banks
of the Da-
nube.

Towards the middle of this century, two Turkish chiefs, Bologudes and Gylas, whose territories lay on the banks of the Danube, made a public profession of Christianity, and were baptized at Constantinople. Of these the former soon apostatized; the other steadily persevered, received instruction from Hierotheus, a Bishop who had accompanied him from Constantinople, and encouraged the labours of that Bishop amongst his subjects. Sarolta, In Hungary. the daughter of Gylas, being afterwards married to Geyfa, the chief of the Hungarian nation, he was by her persuaded to embrace

brace Christianity. Geyfa, however, still retained a predilection for his ancient superstitions, and was only prevented from apostatizing by the zeal and authority of Adalbert, Archbishop of Prague, who visited Hungary towards the conclusion of this century. But however imperfect might be the conversion of the king, the most salutary consequences followed the reception of the Gospel by his subjects. Humanity, peace, and civilization, began to flourish amongst a fierce and barbarous people; and under the patronage of Stephen, the son of Geyfa, Christianity became completely established in Hungary.

CENT.
X.

The inhabitants of Poland were, during this century, blessed Poland. with the knowledge of Christianity. Some Poles, travelling into Bohemia and Moravia, were struck with the preaching of the Gospel, and, on their return, earnestly recommended it to the attention of their countrymen. The report at length reaching the ears of Micislaus, the Duke of Poland, he was induced to divorce his seven wives, and married Dambrouca, the daughter of Boleslaus, Duke of Bohemia. He was baptized in the year 965, and, by the zealous efforts of the Duke and Duchess, their subjects were either persuaded or obliged, by degrees, to abandon their idolatry, and to profess the religion of Christ.

The conversions which had taken place in Russia during the preceding century were neither sincere nor permanent. But in the year 961, Wolodomir, having married Anne, sister of the Greek Emperor Basilus the Second, was prevailed upon by that princess to receive the Christian faith. He was accordingly baptized in the year 987. The Russians followed, without compulsion or reluctance, the example of their prince; and from that time

Progress in
Russia.

CENT. time Russia received a Christian establishment, and considered her-
X. self as a daughter of the Greek Church.

In Scandina-
 via.

If we turn our attention towards Scandinavia, we find, that Christianity, which had been so successfully introduced during the preceding century, had met with a severe check in Denmark under the reign of Gormo the Third, who laboured to extirpate it entirely. At length, however, he was compelled by Henry the First, called the *Fowler*, the predecessor of Otho the Great, to permit the profession and propagation of Christianity in his dominions; and under the protection of the Emperor, Unni, then Archbishop of Hamburg, with some other ecclesiastics, came into Denmark, and formed many Christian Churches in that kingdom. On the death of Gormo, his successor Harold, being defeated by Otho the Great, A.D. 949, by the command of his conqueror, though not unwillingly, embraced the Gospel, and zealously supported and propagated it amongst his subjects during his reign. Suen-Otho, however, his son and successor, entirely renounced the Christian name, and persecuted his Christian subjects in the most cruel manner. At length, being driven from his throne, and forced into exile amongst the Scots, he was led to reflect on his Christian education, and to repent of his apostasy; and being restored to his kingdom, spent the remainder of his life in the most sincere and earnest endeavours to promote the cause of Christianity in his dominions. In Sweden, an almost entire extinction of the Gospel had taken place. Unni, animated by his success in Denmark, determined therefore on attempting a revival of it in that country. His pious exertions were rendered prosperous, and he had the happiness of confirming the Gospel in Sweden, and of planting it even in the remoter parts of that northern region.

It

It was during this century that Norway first received the Christian faith. Several attempts were previously made in the early part of it, which were altogether unsuccessful. The barbarous Norwegians resisted both the exhortations of the English missionaries, and the more forcible endeavours of their princes, to convert them from their idolatry, till the year 945; when Haco, King of Norway, who had been driven from his throne, was restored by Harold, King of Denmark; and having been converted by that prince during his exile, publicly recommended Christianity to his subjects. The impression, however, which was thus made upon their minds, was but slight; nor were they entirely persuaded to become Christians till the reign of his successor Olaus. At length Swein, King of Denmark, having conquered Norway, obliged his subjects universally to renounce idolatry, and to profess the Gospel. Amongst the missionaries whose labours were rendered successful in this work, Guthebald, an English priest, was the most eminent both in merit and authority. From Norway, the salutary light of Christianity spread into the Orkney islands, which were then subject to that country, and penetrated, in some degree, even into the remote regions of Iceland and Greenland. So that in this century the triumph of Christianity was complete throughout Scandinavia.

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X.

In Germany, the exertions of the Emperor Otho contributed, in a signal manner, to promote the interests of Christianity, and to establish it on the most firm foundations throughout the empire. At the earnest request of the Rugi, a remarkably barbarous people, who inhabited the country of Pomerania, between the Oder and the Wipper, and the isle of Rugen in the Baltic, that zealous prince sent Adalbert amongst them, to revive the knowledge of Christianity, which had formerly existed, but was then extinguished.

In Germany.

CENT. X. guished. The mission, however, was unsuccessful. But Adalbert, being afterwards appointed the first Archbishop of Magdeburgh, was successful in converting great numbers of the Slavonians.

The Saracens.

Throughout this century, the Saracens in Asia and Africa successfully propagated the doctrines of Mohammed, and multitudes even of Christians were the victims of their delusions. The Turks, also, received the religion of the Arabian impostor; and, turning their arms against the Saracens, began to lay the foundations of that powerful empire which they afterwards established.

Normans.

In the West, Christianity was persecuted by the barbarous efforts of the unconverted Normans, Sarmatians, Slavonians, Bohemians, and Hungarians; while the Arabs in Spain, Italy, and the neighbouring islands, oppressed and plundered its followers.

CENT. XI.
Progress in
Tartary.

The zeal of the Nestorian Christians continued to be conspicuous in *the eleventh century*. In Tartary and the adjacent countries they succeeded in converting great numbers to the profession of Christianity. In the provinces of Casgar, Nuacheta, Turkistan, Genda, and Tangut, metropolitan prelates, with many inferior bishops, were established; from which it evidently appears, that Christianity must have flourished to a considerable extent in those countries which are now the seat of Mohammedism and idolatry.

In the north
of Europe.

The light which had been diffused during the preceding centuries amongst the Hungarians, Danes, Poles, and Russians, was considerably increased and extended during the present by the zealous endeavours of their princes, and of the missionaries who laboured amongst them. An ineffectual attempt was made to convert the Slavonians as a nation, (great numbers of individuals having embraced

braced Christianity during the preceding century,) the Obotriti, whose capital was Mecklenburg, the Venedi, who dwelt on the banks of the Vistula, and the Prussians. But these barbarous nations continued, in a great measure, Pagan throughout this century. Bolelaus, King of Poland, attempted to force his subjects into a profession of Christianity, and some of his attendants used the more evangelical methods of admonition and instruction. In a benevolent undertaking, however, of this kind, Boniface and eighteen other persons were barbarously massacred by this fierce and intractable people. The Prussians, indeed, seem to have been among the last of the European nations who submitted to the yoke of Christianity. In Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, the labours of English missionaries were particularly distinguished in this century.

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XI.

Christianity had now been preached during three centuries in Scandinavia, and the effects which it produced on the manners of the rough and uncultivated inhabitants of those northern regions were in the highest degree beneficial. "That restless people," Mr. Hume observes, "seem about this time to have learned the use of tillage; which thenceforth kept them at home, and freed the other nations of Europe from the devastations spread over them by those piratical invaders. This proved one great cause of the settlement and improvement of the southern nations." This observation of the celebrated historian represents, with his usual perspicuity, the advantages which resulted from the civilization of the North, but it is silent as to the *true cause* of that important change. To the *propagation of Christianity* it must unquestion-

Effects of
Christianity
in the North.

* Hume, vol. i. chap. 5.

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XI.

ably be chiefly referred. It was the influence of this divine religion which gradually softened the manners of those barbarous nations, induced them to abandon their former piratical habits, and to cultivate the arts of industry and peace. Christianity, be it remembered, while it conveys to individuals the most important knowledge, and imparts to them the richest blessings, diffuses the salutary precepts of order, tranquillity, and happiness, throughout society and the world at large.

During this century, the island of Sicily was recovered from the Saracens. But in part of Asia, and in Spain, the Christians were severely oppressed both by the Saracens and the Turks; great numbers were, in the mean time, seduced by flatteries and delusive offers into apostasy from the faith. In Hungary, Denmark, the lower parts of Germany, and in other European nations, the Christians were, also, much harassed and persecuted by the idolatrous Pagans; whose violence was, however, at length effectually restrained by the powerful interference of the Christian princes.

The Cru-
sades.

It was at the close of this century^o that the first of those romantic expeditions, distinguished by the name of Crusades, was undertaken. Whatever motives of a religious nature might have actuated their promoters, there can be no hesitation in determining, that they contributed neither to the support nor advancement of Christianity. “Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis—” But the consideration of these enthusiastic undertakings belongs not to our present subject.

• A. D. 1096.

The

The propagation of the Gospel was successfully continued in C E N T. XII. *the twelfth century*, chiefly in the north of Europe. Boleslaus, Duke of Poland, having taken Stetin, the capital of Pomerania, by storm, and laid waste the surrounding country, compelled the vanquished inhabitants to submit at discretion; and imposed upon them, as a condition of peace, their reception of Christianity. The conqueror sent Otho, Bishop of Bamberg, in the year 1124, to instruct his new subjects in the doctrines of the Gospel. Many of them, among whom were the Duke and Dukes, and their attendants, were converted by his exhortations; but great numbers of the idolatrous Pomeranians resisted his utmost efforts, and obstinately adhered to the superstitions of their ancestors. In a second visit in the year 1126, the venerable Bishop was more successful, and Christianity was established in Pomerania on a solid foundation. Progress in the north of Europe. Pomerania.

In the year 1168, Waldemar, King of Denmark, who was foremost among the northern princes of this century by his zeal in the propagation and advancement of Christianity, having subdued the island of Rugen, which lies in the neighbourhood of Pomerania, obliged its rude and piratical inhabitants to listen to the instructions of the missionaries who accompanied his army. Among these, Absalom, Archbishop of Lunden, a man of superior talents and virtue, was eminently distinguished; and by his exertions, Christianity was firmly seated in this island, which had hitherto baffled every attempt to enlighten it.

The Finlanders, whose character resembled that of the inhabitants of Rugen, and who infested Sweden with their predatory incursions, received the Gospel in a similar manner. Eric, King of Sweden, having totally defeated these barbarians, sent Henry, Arch- Finland.

CENT. XII. Archbishop of Upsal, to evangelize them. His success was so great, that he is called *the Apostle of the Finlanders*; yet he was at length assassinated by some of these refractory people, on account of a heavy penance which he had imposed on a person of great authority.

Livonia. In Livonia, the propagation of Christianity was carried on towards the close of this century with a violence and cruelty altogether abhorrent from the mild and benevolent spirit of our holy religion. The labours of Mainard, the first missionary who attempted the conversion of that barbarous people, having proved unsuccessful, the Roman Pontiff, Urban the Third, who had consecrated him Bishop of the Livonians, declared a crusade against them, which was zealously carried on by that ecclesiastic, and by his successors, Berthold and Albert. These warlike apostles, at the head of great bodies of troops raised in Saxony, successively entered Livonia, and compelled the wretched inhabitants to receive Christian baptism.

The Slavonians. The Slavonians, notwithstanding some partial conversions among them, had hitherto as a nation shewn a remarkable aversion to Christianity. This excited the zeal of the neighbouring princes, and of certain missionaries, who united their efforts to conquer their prejudices, and to convert them to the Christian faith. The most successful of these teachers was Vicelinus, a man of singular learning and piety, who was, at length, appointed Bishop of Oldenburg, which see was afterwards transferred to Lubeck. This excellent man spent the last thirty years of his life in the instruction of the Slavonians, amidst great difficulties and dangers; and his benevolent labours were conducted with so much wisdom, that they were attended with a success which could

could scarcely have been expected amongst that untractable CENT.
XII.
people.

The revolution, which, at the beginning of this century, took place in Asiatic Tartary, on the borders of Cathay^p, by the successful enterprise of the celebrated Nestorian, Prester John, proved for many years highly beneficial to the Christian cause. Towards the close of it, however, the victorious arms of Genghis Khan overturned the kingdom which he had established, and Christianity in consequence lost much of its credit and authority. It continued gradually to decline, until at length it sunk entirely under the weight of oppression; and was succeeded partly by the errors of Mohammedism, and partly by the superstitions of Paganism. In Syria and Palestine, the Christians were, during the whole of this century, engaged in contests with the Mohammedans. Scenes of persecution and cruelty were exhibited on both sides, and Christianity suffered almost equally from her enemies and her friends.

Notwithstanding the victories of the successors of Genghis Khan, by which they had subdued a great part of Asia, and had CENT.
XIII.
involved in great calamities the Christian inhabitants of China, India, and Persia, it appears from undoubted authorities that both in China, and in the northern parts of Asia, the Nestorians continued to have a flourishing Church, and a great number of adherents in *the thirteenth century*. Even in the court of the Mogul emperors there were many who professed Christianity; but the ensnaring influence of the religion of Mohammed gradually undermined it, and left scarcely a vestige of Christianity amongst

^p Cathay was situated on the north west border of China.

them.

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them. In consequence of the incursions which were made by the Tartars into Europe in the year 1241, several embassies were sent by the Popes Innocent the Fourth and Nicholas the Third and Fourth, which were the means of converting many of the Tartars to the Christian faith, and of engaging considerable numbers of the Nestorians to adopt the doctrine and discipline of the Church of Rome. Several Churches were also erected in different parts of China and Tartary; and, in order to facilitate the propagation of Christianity, a translation was made by Johannes a Monte Corvino, the ambassador of Nicholas the Fourth, of the New Testament and the Psalms, into the language of Tartary. The affairs, however, of the Christians in the East during this century, in consequence of the conquests of the Tartars, and of the unfortunate issue of the several crusades which were undertaken in the course of it, and which were *the last* of those infatuated expeditions, were, upon the whole, in a very deplorable condition. The kingdom of Jerusalem, which had been established at the close of the eleventh century, being entirely overthrown, many of the Latins remained still in Syria, and retiring into the dark and solitary recesses of Mount Libanus, lived there in a wild and savage manner, and gradually lost all traces both of religion and civilization. The descendants of these unhappy Europeans, called Derusi, or Drusi, still inhabit the same uncultivated wilds, and retain nothing of Christianity but the name.

Conversion of
the Prussians
and Lithua-
nians.

In some of the northern parts of Europe, the religion of the Gospel had not yet triumphed over the fierceness and superstitions of Paganism. The Prussians still retained the idolatrous worship of their ancestors, nor was any impression made on the minds of this people by the various missionaries who had been sent amongst them. Their obstinacy at length induced Conrad, Duke of Mas-
sovia,

fovia, to have recourse to more forcible methods of converting them. For this purpose, he applied in the year 1230 to the Teutonic Knights of St. Mary, who, after their expulsion from Palestine, had settled at Venice, and engaged them to undertake the conquest and conversion of the Prussians. They accordingly arrived in Prussia, and, after an obstinate contest of fifty years, they subdued its resolute inhabitants, and established their own dominion and the profession of Christianity amongst them. The Knights pursued the same unchristian methods in the neighbouring countries, and particularly in Lithuania, the inhabitants of which provinces were thus constrained to profess a feigned submission to the Gospel.

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In Spain, Christianity gradually gained ground. The kings of Castile, Leon, Navarre, and Arragon, waged perpetual war with the Saracen princes, who still retained the kingdoms of Valentia, Granada, and Mercia, together with the province of Andalusia. This contest was carried on with such signal success, that the Saracen dominion declined daily, and was reduced within narrower bounds; while the pale of the Church was extended on every side. Among the princes who contributed to this happy revolution, James the First of Arragon was particularly distinguished by his zealous efforts in the advancement of Christianity, and the conversion of his Arabian subjects after his recovery of Valentia, in the year 1236.

Progress in
Spain.

In *the fourteenth century*, the cause of Christianity greatly declined in the East. The profession of it was, indeed, still retained in the contracted empire of the Greeks, of which Constantinople was the metropolis. But in Asia, the Turks and Tartars, who extended their dominions with astonishing rapidity, destroyed,

C E N T.
XIV.

Decline of
Christianity
in the East.

CENT. XIV. wherever they went, the fruits of the labours of the Christian missionaries during the preceding century, and substituted the imposture of Mohammed for the religion of Christ. In China, Christianity seemed to be almost totally extirpated by the jealousy of the reigning powers; while the celebrated Tamerlane, after having subdued the greatest part of Asia, and triumphed over Bajazet, the Emperor of the Turks, and even filled Europe with the terror of his arms, persecuted all who bore the Christian name with the most barbarous severity, and compelled multitudes, by his cruelties, to apostatize from the faith. Attempts were made in this century to renew the crusades, but without effect. It is obvious, however, that, had they even succeeded, they were but ill calculated to revive Christianity in the East.

Progress in
Lithuania.

The boundaries of Christianity had, in the mean time, been gradually extending in Europe. Jagello, Duke of Lithuania, was almost the only prince who retained the Pagan worship of his ancestors. At length, in the year 1386, having become a competitor for the crown of Poland, and his idolatry being the only obstacle to his success, he embraced the Christian faith, and persuaded his subjects to follow his example. The Teutonic Knights continued their persecution of the Pagan Prussians and Livonians, and completed in this century the violent work which they had commenced during the preceding. Great numbers of the Jews in several parts of Europe, more particularly in France and Germany, were in a similar manner compelled to make a profession of Christianity. And in Spain, a plan was formed by the Christian princes for the expulsion of the Saracens, which afforded a prospect of at length uniting that whole country in the faith of Christ.

The succeeding century accordingly witnessed the entire overthrow of the Saracen dominion in Spain, by the conquest of Granada, in the year 1492, by Ferdinand the Catholic. Shortly after this important revolution, that monarch published a sentence of banishment against the Jews in his dominions, great numbers of whom, to avoid this severe decree, feigned an assent to the Christian religion. The Saracens, who remained in Spain after the destruction of their empire, resisted both the exhortations, and the more violent methods of proselytism, which were afterwards recommended by the celebrated Cardinal Ximenes, and persevered in their attachment to the Arabian impostor.

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The people of Samogitia, in the neighbourhood of Courland and Lithuania, remained Pagan till the fifteenth century; when Uladislaus, King of Poland, demolished their idols, founded some Churches among them, and afterwards sent some priests to instruct them. But his success in their conversion was by no means considerable.

The Samogitæ.

The maritime enterprises of the Portuguese towards the close of this century, and, above all, the discovery of the islands and continent of America by Columbus, in the year 1492, opened, however, a new and extensive field for the exertion of Christian benevolence.

Discovery of
America.

The first attempt of this kind was made by the Portuguese, amongst the Africans of the kingdom of Congo; who, together with their king, were suddenly converted to the Romish faith in the year 1491; in what manner, and with what effect, it is not difficult to determine.

Progress of
Christianity
on the coast
of Africa.

After this singular revolution in Africa, Pope Alexander the Sixth, who had arrogantly divided the continent of America between the Spaniards and the Portuguese, earnestly exhorted these

CENT. XV. two nations to propagate the Gospel amongst the inhabitants of those immense regions. A great number of Franciscans and Dominicans were in consequence sent out to America and its islands; In America and its islands. who, with the assistance of the cruel invaders of those countries, speedily converted numbers of the wretched natives to the nominal profession of a corrupt and debased form of Christianity.

Decline of Christianity in the East. But the decline of the Christian religion in the East during this century unhappily more than counterbalanced these accessions in the West. Asiatic Tartary, Mogul, Tangut, and the adjacent provinces, where Christianity had long flourished, were now become the seats of superstition, which reigned triumphant in its most degrading forms. Except in China, where the Nestorians still preserved some faint remains of their former glory, scarcely any traces of Christianity existed in those immense tracts of country; and even these did not survive the century.

Destruction of the Grecian empire by the Turks. A new source of calamity to the Christian Church, both in Europe and Asia, was opened, by the destruction of the Grecian empire, and the capture of Constantinople, by the Turks, under Mohammed the Second, in the year 1453. By this disastrous event, besides the provinces which had been already subdued by the Ottoman arms, Epirus and Greece fell under the dominion of the Crescent, and Christianity became gradually^a buried under the resistless torrent of Mohammedan ignorance and barbarism. In Constantinople and the neighbouring cities, in Thessalonica, Philippi, and Corinth, where Christianity had once so eminently flourished, most of the Churches were converted into mosques, and the Christians were forced at length to retain their religion in secret and in

^a See note F.

silence. Yet even this tremendous ruin, the just consequence of the corrupt state of the Grecian Church, was eventually, by the providence of the supreme Governor of the world, rendered subservient to the most important and beneficial purposes. The emigration of learned men from the East was one of the principal means of reviving the study of literature in Europe, and the remarkable concurrent discovery of the art of printing in the year 1440 contributed both to the production and the success of that memorable revolution, which in the succeeding century changed the face of the Christian world.

This great event was *the Reformation* from the errors and superstitions of the Romish Church, which commenced in Saxony by the magnanimous exertions of the justly celebrated Martin Luther, and which forms the most prominent feature in the history of the *sixteenth century*. Europe at this time, with very few exceptions, was converted to the public profession of Christianity, though scarcely any thing short of the ruin which had overwhelmed the Eastern Church could be more deplorable than the state of the Western, at the commencement of this period. The thick darkness which had gradually overspread it was beginning to be dispelled, by the revival of literature and philosophy during the preceding century; but at the glorious æra of the Reformation, the pure light of moral and religious truth shone forth with renovated lustre, and produced the most important effects on the general state of Europe. The profession of Christianity, which now pervaded almost every part of that quarter of the world, necessarily precluded any further propagation of it, and restrained its European history to that of the contests between the Reformers and the Church of Rome.

C E N T.
XVI.

Progress of
Christianity
in America
and else-
where by the
Spaniards and
Portuguese.

Nature of it.

For the extension, therefore, of the pale of the visible Church during this century, we must chiefly look to the newly discovered regions of America. The Spaniards and Portuguese, if we may give credit to their historians, exerted themselves with the utmost vigour and success in propagating the Gospel amongst the barbarous nations of the new world. It cannot, indeed, be disputed, that they communicated some faint and imperfect knowledge of Christianity to the inhabitants of America, to those parts of Africa to which they carried their invading arms, and to the islands and maritime provinces of Asia, which they subjected to their dominion. It is certain, also, that considerable numbers of these unhappy people, who had hitherto been enslaved by the most abject superstition, apparently embraced the religion of Christ. But, when it is considered, that these nominal conversions were obtained by the most violent and cruel methods, and that their acquaintance with Christianity consisted only of a blind veneration for their instructors, and the performance of a few unmeaning ceremonies, we are tempted, with some of the most pious and intelligent even of their own writers, rather to lament that the Gospel should ever have been thus propagated; and to regard both the labours of these false apostles, and their converts, with a mixture of indignation and pity.

The progress of the Reformation having given an effectual check to the ambition of the Roman Pontiffs, and even deprived them of a great part of their spiritual dominion in Europe, they began to direct their attention to other quarters of the world; and, to indemnify themselves for these losses, they became more solicitous than they had ever yet been to propagate Christianity in Pagan countries. In the execution of this design, the renowned society of Jesuits, which was established by Ignatius Loyola in the

year

year 1540, seemed particularly calculated to assist the Court of Rome. A certain proportion of their order, who were to be at the absolute disposal of the Roman Pontiff, were accordingly, from its commencement, directed to be formed for the work of propagating Christianity amongst unenlightened nations. Great numbers of this important society were in consequence employed in the conversion of the African, American, and Indian heathens. But both the credit and the real success of their labours were lessened and obscured by *the corrupt motives* which too evidently appeared to actuate these zealous missionaries, and by *the unchristian means* which they adopted to accomplish their purpose.

The example of the Jesuits excited the emulation of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and of several other religious orders; but it may be justly doubted, whether the interests of pure and undefiled Christianity were not rather injured than promoted by their labours.

Amongst the members of the society of Jesuits who were thus engaged in the propagation of the Gospel, Francis Xavier, who acquired the honourable title of *the Apostle of the Indians*, obtained the most distinguished reputation. In the year 1522, this great man, who possessed many of the requisites of a successful missionary, set sail for the Portuguese settlements in India; and in a short time spread the knowledge of Christianity, as it is professed by the Church of Rome, in many parts of the continent, and in several of the islands of that remote region. From thence, in the year 1529, he passed into Japan, and there laid, with incredible activity, the foundations of the Church, which flourished during so many years in that island and its dependencies. His indefatigable zeal prompted him to attempt the conversion of the vast empire of China; and, with this intention, he embarked for that country,

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XVI.

His labours
in India and
Japan.

CENT. country, but died in sight of the object of his voyage, in the year
XVI. 1552. After his death, other members of his order penetrated
 Those of into China. The chief of these was Matthew Ricci, an Italian,
 Ricci in Chi- who rendered himself so acceptable to the Chinese Emperor and
 na. his nobles by his mathematical knowledge, that he obtained for
 himself and his associates the liberty of explaining to the people
 the doctrines of the Gospel. Ricci may therefore be considered as
 the founder of the Christian Church, which, notwithstanding the
 vicissitudes it has undergone, still subsists in China^r.

Protestant at- The dominions of the Protestant princes being confined within
 tempts. the limits of Europe, the Churches under their protection could
 contribute but little towards the propagation of the Gospel in
 those distant regions which have been just mentioned. It is cer-
 tain, however, that in the year 1556, fourteen Protestant mission-
 aries were sent from Geneva to convert the Americans, although
 it is neither known by whom this design was promoted, nor with
 what success it was attended. The English also, who, towards
 the close of this century, sent colonies into the northern parts of
 America, gradually extended their religion amongst that rude and
 uncivilized people. It may be added, that about this time the
 Swedes exerted themselves in converting to Christianity many of
 the inhabitants of Finland and Lapland, of whom considerable
 numbers had hitherto retained the extravagant superstitions of
 their Pagan ancestors.

The vigorous attempts which were made during this century to
 support the grandeur of the Papal see, by the propagation of
 Christianity in distant nations, were renewed during *the next*^s,

^r See Barrow's Travels in China.

^s i. e. the seventeenth.

and

and were attended with considerable success. In the year 1622, CENT. XVII. Gregory the Fifteenth, by the advice of his confessor Narni, founded at Rome the celebrated College “De propagandâ fide,” College “De propagandâ fide.” and endowed it with ample revenues. The College consisted of thirteen cardinals, two priests, and one secretary, and was designed to propagate and maintain the religion of the Church of Rome in every quarter of the globe. The funds of this society were so greatly augmented by the munificence of Urban the Eighth, and the liberality of other benefactors, that it became adequate to the most splendid and extensive undertakings. The objects to which its attention was directed, were the support of missionaries in various parts of the world; the publication of books to facilitate the study of foreign languages; the translation of the Scriptures, and other pious writings, into various tongues; the establishment of seminaries for the education of young men destined to act as missionaries; the erection of houses for the reception of young Pagans yearly sent to Rome, who, on their return to their native countries, were to become the instructors of their unenlightened brethren; and the support of charitable institutions for the relief of those who might suffer on account of their zeal in the service of the Church of Rome. Such were the arduous and complicated schemes of this celebrated College. To this, however, another of Other similar establishments. a similar kind was added in the year 1627 by Pope Urban the Eighth, which owed its origin to the piety and munificence of John Baptist Viles, a Spanish nobleman. The same spirit of pious beneficence was communicated to France about the year 1663, and produced several other establishments of this nature; particularly the “Congregation of Priests of foreign missions,” and the “Parisian Seminary for the missions abroad;” the one for the actual sending forth of missionaries, the other for the education of fit persons for that important work. A third society in France was

C E N T. XVII. denominated, "the Congregation of the holy Sacrament," and was under the direction of the Pope, and the College De propagandâ at Rome.

Missionaries
from these
institutions.

Practices of
the Jesuits.

From these various institutions a great number of missionaries were sent forth during the seventeenth century to different parts of the world, who converted multitudes to the outward profession of Christianity, and subjection to the Church of Rome. The religious orders who chiefly distinguished themselves in these missions were the Jesuits, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and the Capuchins; who, though engaged in one great, common design, mutually opposed and accused each other. Of these, the Jesuits are justly considered as having employed the most unwarrantable methods in the propagation of Christianity^t. They were accustomed to explain the doctrines of Paganism in such a manner, as to soften and diminish, at least in appearance, their opposition to the truths of the Gospel; and wherever the faintest resemblance could be traced between them, they endeavoured to persuade their disciples of the coincidence of the two religions. They permitted their proselytes, also, to retain such of their ancient rites and customs as were not glaringly inconsistent with Christian worship; and thus laboured to effect a *coalition* between *Paganism* and *Christianity*. To these artifices they added an unwearied assiduity in conciliating the favour and confidence of the priests, and civil governors of the people, to whom they were sent, and that by means wholly unworthy of the character of Christian ambassadors to the heathen. It should be mentioned, to the honour of the other religious orders who were engaged in similar undertakings, that they uniformly disdained this worldly policy of

^t See note G.

the Jesuits; and, wherever they went, preached the peculiar, exclusive, and unaccommodating doctrines of Christianity with Apostolic boldness and simplicity.

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By the labours of these various missionaries, the knowledge of Christianity was disseminated, during this century, through the greatest part of Asia. The Jesuits and others communicated some rays of divine truth, though mixed with much error and superstition, to those parts of India which had been possessed by the Portuguese previous to their expulsion by the Dutch. The most celebrated of the missions which were established in that remote region was that of Madura, which was undertaken by Robert de Nobili, an Italian Jesuit. The plan which he adopted for the conversion of the Indians is a singular specimen of that worldly and temporizing policy, which has so justly brought reproach on the missions of his society. He assumed the appearance of a Brahmin, who had come from a far distant country, and by his austerities, and other artifices, persuaded many native Brahmins to receive him as a member of their order, and to submit to his instructions. By their influence and example, great numbers of the people were induced to become his disciples, and the mission continued in a flourishing condition till the year 1744; when, with others in the kingdoms of Carnate and Marava, which the Jesuits had established, it was formally suppressed by Benedict the Fourteenth, who expressed his disapprobation of the methods which they had practised for the conversion of the heathen ^{Robert de Nobili.} ^{Their labours in India.} u.

Christianity was, during this century, first conveyed to the

* For a full account of this famous mission, of which the Jesuits particularly boast, see the "Lettres Curieuses et Edifiantes écrites des Missions Etrangères."

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Siam, Ton-
quin, and
Cochin-Chi-
na. kingdoms of Siam, Tonquin, and Cochin-China, by a mission of the Jesuits, under the direction of Alexander of Rhodes, a native of Avignon; whose instructions were received with uncommon docility by an immense number of the inhabitants of those countries. The mission continued to be successful in the kingdom of Siam till the year 1688, when the violent death of the king and his chief minister, who favoured it, obliged the missionaries to return home.

Mission of the
Jesuits in
China.

At the commencement of this century, a numerous society of Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins, proceeded to China with a view to enlighten that vast empire with the knowledge of the Gospel. Though differing in other points, these discordant missionaries agree in asserting the wonderful success which attended their labours. The Jesuits especially, by their literary and scientific attainments, acquired great influence with two successive Chinese emperors, which they directed to the furtherance of their great and important design; and had their integrity been as great as their talents and activity, they would have acquired immortal renown by their exertions in the cause of Christianity in this immense region*. But they pursued in China the same compromising plan which has been already mentioned, and which they did not hesitate to defend, by resorting to the plea of necessity; alleging, that certain evils and inconveniences may be lawfully submitted to for the attainment of important and salutary purposes.

* Lett. Cur. et Edif. tom. viii. The progress of this mission, and the charges urged against the conduct of the Jesuits, are sufficiently detailed in Mosheim, cent. 17. vol. v.

The ministerial labours of the Romish missionaries, particularly of the Jesuits, were eminently successful, about the same period, C E N T.
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in the islands of Japan, notwithstanding the jealousy and opposition of the native priests and nobles, and the still more fatal disputes of the missionaries amongst themselves. The success, however, of the Gospel in Japan was, unhappily, but of short duration. In the year 1615, the hopes of its ministers were suddenly blasted, by the publication of a persecuting edict of the emperor, occasioned, as it is generally agreed, by the discovery of certain seditious designs of the Jesuits; which was executed with a degree of barbarity unparalleled in the annals of Christian history. This cruel persecution, during which many both among the Jesuits and their adversaries testified the sincerity of their attachment to the Christian faith, and almost expiated, if the expression may be allowed, the errors of their ministry, raged for many years with unrelenting fury; and ended only with the total extinction of Christianity throughout that empire.

The example of the Roman Catholic states tended to excite a spirit of pious emulation in Protestant countries, to propagate their purer form of Christianity amongst the heathen nations. Protestant at-
tempts. The peculiar situation of the Lutheran princes, whose territories were for the most part within the limits of Europe, prevented them from engaging in this laudable design. This was, however, by no means the case with all the states who professed the reformed religion. The English and Dutch, more especially, whose commerce extended over the whole world, and who had sent colonies to Asia, Africa, and America, had the fairest opportunities of exerting themselves in this great cause; and although neither of these nations can be said to have improved them to the utmost of its power, they by no means entirely neglected them.

In

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English Society for the
Propagation of the Gospel.

In the year 1647, a Society was established in England by an Act of Parliament, for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts. The civil war, which ensued, suspended the execution of this plan; but at the Restoration the work was resumed. In the year 1701, this respectable Society was incorporated by a charter, and received other marks of favour from King William the Third; and was enriched with new donations and privileges. Since that period, it has been frequently distinguished by royal munificence, and by the liberality of many private persons. The primary object of this Society being to promote Christianity in the British colonies, its exertions have hitherto been principally directed to the plantations in North America; where several missionaries and schoolmasters are constantly employed at its expence, in places which would otherwise have been destitute of the public worship of God, and almost of the knowledge of the Gospel.

Efforts of the
United Provinces.

The efforts of the United Provinces were successfully directed to the islands of Ceylon and Formosa, the coast of Malabar, and other Asiatic settlements, which they had either acquired by their own industry, or had conquered from the Portuguese. No sooner were the Dutch sufficiently established in the East Indies, than they formed various schemes for the religious instruction of the natives; great numbers of whom^y were converted to the Christian faith.

Roman Catholic
missions in Africa.

In Africa, the missionaries of the Church of Rome were in the year 1634 banished from the kingdom of Abyssinia. But on the western coast of that continent, the Capuchin missionaries, after enduring the most dreadful hardships and discouragements, suc-

^y See Epist. de Successu Evangelii apud Indos Orientales. Ultraject. 1699.

ceeded in persuading the kings of Benin and Awerri, and the queen of Metcmba, to embrace Christianity, about the year 1652. CENT.
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The conversions, however, which took place among the Africans, are acknowledged to have been very slight and imperfect, and to have been confined to the maritime provinces ; and more particularly to the Portuguese settlements. The interior of this great peninsula remains still, in a great measure, inaccessible to the most adventurous Europeans.

The late auspicious measure of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and the formation of the African Institution, will however, it is hoped, gradually lead to the civilization of this long injured continent, and eventually to the propagation of Christianity amongst its unhappy natives.

The various colonies from Spain, Portugal, and France, which were established in the extensive continent of America, were instrumental in diffusing some faint and corrupted notions of Christianity among the conquered and the neighbouring nations. Great multitudes of them, however, were prevented, by their distance from European settlements, and their wandering and unsettled state, from deriving even this slight advantage. The Jesuits, under the pretence of propagating the Christian religion, but, in reality, to gratify their own insatiable avarice and inordinate ambition, erected several cities, and founded civil societies, cemented by government and laws, in several provinces both in South and North America. The most celebrated of these settlements was in the province of Paraguay, where, by their insinuating manners, and the natural ascendancy of talents, they succeeded in forming a republic composed of Indians, from which every European was cautiously excluded. In order to prevent more effectually all communication between the Indians and Europeans, the Spanish
lan-

Jesuits in
South America.

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language was prohibited throughout the extent of this new empire ; and the natives were accustomed to regard the Jesuits not only as their instructors, but as their sovereigns, and to look upon all other Europeans as their mortal enemies. Such was the state of things till the year 1752, when the mystery of this singular government was disclosed, by the attempts of the courts of Spain and Portugal to execute a treaty respecting the limits of their several dominions ; which being resisted by the Jesuits, and a war ensuing between the Spaniards and Portuguese and the Indians, the real views of the Jesuits became apparent, and an effectual check was given to their ambition.

The English
in North
America.

The cause of Christianity was more wisely and successfully promoted in those parts of America, in which the English had formed settlements during this century ; and, notwithstanding the various obstacles which it had to encounter, it made in a short time some considerable progress. The Independents, who retired to America on account of their dissent from the Established Church, claim the honour of beginning this important work. Several families of Independents, which had been settled in Holland, removed to America^z in the year 1620 ; and there laid the foundations of a new state. The success which attended this first emigration induced great numbers of the Puritans to follow the example in the year 1629. Between the years 1631 and 1634, fresh emigrants arrived, amongst whom were the Puritans Mayhew, Sheppard, and Elliott ; men who were eminently qualified by their piety, zeal, and fortitude, for the arduous work of converting the savage natives. In this they were all remarkably laborious and successful ; but more particularly the latter, who learned

^z To that part of America which was afterwards called New Plymouth.

their

their language, into which he translated the Bible, and other instructive books, collected the wandering Indians together, and formed them into regular societies; instructed them in a manner suited to their dull apprehensions; and by his zeal, ingenuity, and indefatigable industry, merited, and obtained at his death, the title of *the Apostle of the North American Indians* ^a. CENT.
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In the American provinces which were taken from the Portuguese by the Dutch, under the command of Count Maurice of Nassau, zealous efforts were made for the conversion of the natives by their new masters, and with much success: but the recovery of those territories by the Portuguese, in the year 1644, obscured the pleasing prospect which was beginning to open upon them. In the Dutch colony of Surinam, no attempt has been made to instruct the neighbouring Indians in the knowledge of Christianity, except by the charitable and self-denying labours of the Moravian missionaries ^b. The Dutch.

The eighteenth century was distinguished by very considerable efforts in the great work of propagating the Gospel. The Popish and Protestant missionaries manifested equal zeal in disseminating its doctrines in Asia, Africa, and America. In the early part of the century, the Jesuits converted great numbers to the profession of the Romish faith, in the East Indies, particularly in the kingdoms of Carnate, Madura, and Marava, on the coast of Malabar, in the kingdom of Tonquin, in the Chinese empire, and in certain CENT.
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in India.

^a It was the unexpected success which had attended these pious labours, that first excited the attention of the Parliament and people of England, and gave rise to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which has been before mentioned.

^b See page 60.

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provinces of America. It is, however, to be feared, that the greater number of those whom the Romish missionaries have persuaded to renounce Paganism, are Christians only so far as external profession and the observance of certain religious ceremonies extend; and that, with very little of the true spirit of Christianity, they retain their ancient superstitions under a different form.

Danish mission on the coast of Coromandel.

The converts which were made by the Protestant missionaries during this century, though far less numerous, were, in general, much more solid and sincere. In the year 1706, Frederic the Fourth, King of Denmark, with equal wisdom, piety, and munificence, established a mission for the conversion of the Indians on the coast of Coromandel, which has been eminently successful. The first missionary from this noble institution was Bartholomew Ziegenbalgus, a man of considerable learning and eminent piety*, who applied himself with so much zeal to the study of the language of the country, that in a few years he obtained so perfect a knowledge of it, as to be able to converse fluently with the natives. His addresses to them, and his conferences with the Brahmins, were attended with so much success, that a Christian Church was founded in the second year of his ministry, which has been gradually increasing to the present time. During his residence in India, he maintained a correspondence with several European sovereigns; and on his return to Europe in the year 1714, on the affairs of his mission, he was honoured with an audience by King George the First; and was invited to attend a sitting of the Bishops in the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, to whose patronage the Danish mission had been some time previously re-

Patronized by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

* Dr. Buchanan dates his arrival in India in October 1705. See his Memoir, p. 69.

commended.

commended^d. The grand work, to which the King and the Bishops directed his attention, was a translation of the Scriptures into the Tamel language; and so diligent was this eminent missionary in his studies, that before the year 1719 he had completed that great work, and had, also, composed a Grammar and Dictionary of the same tongue, which are still extant. With this zealous missionary was associated Henry Plutsch, and John Ernest Grundlerus. The first station in which they were established was Tranquebar, on the coast of Coromandel, which has continued to be the chief seat of the Danish mission. Ziegenbalgus finished his mortal course in India at the early age of thirty-six years; but a constant succession of zealous and pious men has been continued, by whose ministry Christianity has been extended to many different parts of India; and although the number of the converts which have been made is far short of that of which the Romish missionaries boast, it must be remembered, that Protestant teachers are not accustomed to consider any as such, until some satisfactory proofs are given of the extent of their knowledge, and of the sincerity of their practice of the Christian religion. Besides the patronage and assistance which the venerable Society for promoting Christian Knowledge thus afforded to the Danish mission at Tranquebar, and which has ever since been continued, in the year 1728 it sent out missionaries at its own expence to Madras; who were followed, in 1737, by others to Cuddalore, Negapatam, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly, and in 1766 to Tirutschinapally; by whose indefatigable labours, above all, by those of the apostolic Swartz, Christian congregations have been formed in those places, and in many others in

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Extension of
Protestant
missions in
India.

^d By the Rev. Anthony William Boehm, Chaplain to Prince George of Denmark.

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their neighbourhood. The same excellent Society also supports a missionary at Malacca.

Missions of
the United
Brethren.

Amongst the Protestant Churches which have distinguished themselves by their zeal in the propagation of Christianity, that of the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Moravians, is entitled to hold a very high rank. It is well known, that this body of Christians have long since purged themselves from the corrupt practices which were once justly objected against them^e, and are now in general distinguished by the peculiar simplicity and purity of their moral and religious conduct. During a long course of years, they have supported missions in various parts of the world; and in ardent zeal for the conversion of the heathen, in patience under the most difficult and trying circumstances, in perseverance amidst the most unpromising appearances, they have never, perhaps, been surpassed by any denomination of Christians. The Church of the United Brethren supports twenty-nine different missions, in which one hundred and sixty missionaries are employed. Their principal stations are in Greenland, on the coast of Labrador, in Canada, and amongst the North American Indians; in the islands of Jamaica, Antigua, St. Christopher's, Tobago; amongst the Indians and free Negroes in Bambey, near Surinam; amongst the Hottentots at Bavian's Kloof, near the Cape of Good Hope; and at Sarepta, near Astracan. Various missions are established in these remote parts of the world, and in many of them they have been signally successful^f.

^e See Mosheim, Vol. VI. p. 23. note.

^f In confirmation of this assertion, see Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa, where a very interesting account is given of the Moravian mission at Bavian's Kloof, on the banks of Zonder End River.

The discoveries which were made by the late celebrated navigator, Captain Cook, and others, during the eighteenth century, opened a vast field for the propagation of Christianity, which has not, however, hitherto been cultivated to any great extent. In the year 1795, a society was formed amongst various classes of English Dissenters, to which large sums were subscribed, and under the auspices of which a mission was undertaken to the island of Otaheite; which, though by no means with a success answering the sanguine expectations of its supporters, continues to exist. The same society has directed its efforts to southern Africa, and to Canada, where its missions have been attended with considerable success^f. Six of its missionaries, also, were sent to Tranquebar in the year 1805, of whom three remained to learn the Tamel tongue, two settled in Ceylon, and a third was on his way to that island. These missionaries have since been followed by several others from the same society, who, with the rest of their brethren, are now labouring in different parts of India^g.

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London Mis-
sionary So-
ciety.

Amongst the regions to which Christianity has been carried during this century, must also be mentioned the colony of New South Wales; where, however, it has been as yet almost entirely confined to the exiled European inhabitants of that remote settlement.

New South
Wales.

In the year 1793, a missionary society was instituted by the English Baptists, the attention of which has been hitherto directed to Bengal. The seat of this mission is fixed at the Danish factory

Baptist Mis-
sionary So-
ciety.

^f See the Reports of this Society, particularly that of the present year, 1807.

^g At Vizigapatnam, and Madras, in Travancore, and at Surat.

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Missionary
Societies in
Scotland.

Towards the close of this century, several other societies were instituted in Scotland, for the purpose of sending missionaries to Pagan countries, the principal of which are at Edinburgh and Glasgow. They had not, however, effected the establishment of any mission till the year 1803; when the Rev. Henry Brunton and Mr. Patterson left Edinburgh, under the patronage of the Missionary Society in that city, with the view of attempting a settlement in the neighbourhood of Astracan. The former of these missionaries had already distinguished himself by his services in Africa, which he was obliged to quit on account of his health, after having made considerable progress in the Soosoo language. At St. Petersburg, Mr. Brunton and his companion met with a very favourable reception from the Russian government, and were furnished with letters to the governors of the different provinces in their way to Astracan. On the eighth of July they arrived at Sarepta, the colony of the United Brethren, and proceeded in a few days to Astracan. Although this city was considered as a favourable situation for endeavouring to extend the Gospel among the Pagans and Mohammedans, Mr. Brunton wished to find a situation contiguous both to Persia and Turkey, whilst it should be rendered secure by being under the Russian government, where missionaries might learn with facility the languages of these countries, and from which they might go forth to preach the Gospel. Accordingly, he proceeded under the protection of the Russian government from Astracan on the tenth of August, for the purpose

^h This mission will be mentioned again in the following Dissertation.

of selecting an eligible spot for his permanent residence. He pitched at length upon a Tartar village, called Karaſs, ſituated near the ſource of the river Cubane, on the frontier of the Ruſſian empire, properly in the Circaſſian country, at an equal diſtance from the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, and being within a few days' journey of Perſia and Bokkaria, and within fifty miles of Turkey. The miſſionaries enjoy the protection of a Ruſſian garrifon in the fort of this village. In this ſtation Mr. Brunton has been joined by ſeveral other miſſionaries, and is proceeding with remarkable zeal and ſucceſs. Beſides endeavouring to inſtruct the natives of the country, and the ſtrangers who viſit them, in the Chriſtian religion, the miſſionaries have purchaſed many native youths, ſlaves to the Circaſſians and Cubane Tartars, and have formed a ſchool for their inſtruction, in which they are taught the Turkiſh and Engliſh languages. Mr. Brunton has written and printed a tract in Arabic againſt Mohammediſm, and diſperſed it with ſucceſs, together with ſome Arabic New Testaments. He has alſo made conſiderable progreſs in tranſlating the Scriptures into the native language. The lateſt accounts which have been received of this intereſting miſſion ſtate that the ſettlement is healthy ; that the baptized natives conduct themſelves in a manner becoming their profeſſion ; that their young people are very promiſing, ſeveral of them being able to read both Turkiſh and Engliſh ; that the prejudices of the ſurrounding natives are not ſo violent as formerly, and that even ſome of the Effendis are become friendly, and ſeem to wiſh well to their cauſe. The Ruſſian government has made them a grant of land, and annexed to the grant certain important privileges¹.

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Karaſs.

At the commencement of *the preſent century*, a ſociety was

¹ See the Proceedings of the Edinburgh Miſſion.

inſtituted

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Society for
missions to
Africa and
the East.

instituted in London by members of the Established Church for missions to Africa and the East. From the want of any offers from our own countrymen, this respectable society was induced to resort to Germany for missionaries to carry its designs into execution. They engaged several pious young men, who were in a course of education at an institution at Berlin for that purpose, to place themselves under their protection. Of these, two, after having received Lutheran ordination, embarked in the year 1804 for the colony at Sierra Leone, on the western coast of Africa, where they have hitherto been chiefly employed in performing the public offices of religion in that settlement, in perfecting their knowledge of the native languages, and in instructing a considerable number of native children. One of them had, however, made some excursions amongst the Soosfos, for the purpose of ascertaining their dispositions, and of fixing on some spot for a missionary station. Three other missionaries, also Germans, have since sailed for Sierra Leone, to join their brethren in that colony.

Extension of
Christianity
in North
America.

In North America, during the present century, a very unusual degree of zeal has been excited for the propagation of Christianity. A missionary society has been established in the province of New Connecticut, consisting chiefly, if not wholly, of Independents, who form there what is called *the Standing Order*. The object, at which they have principally aimed, has been to introduce the knowledge of Christianity into those back settlements, where, as yet, no religious institutions have been formed, and where the inhabitants in general are grossly ignorant. In an account of their proceedings lately published by this society, it appears that very considerable success had attended the labours of their missionaries. The districts in which they had been chiefly employed were the western and northern counties of the state of New York, the northern

northern parts of Vermont, the north-west part of Pennsylvania, and the recent settlement called New Connecticut. The readiness and cordiality with which numbers in these regions have embraced the great truths of the Gospel, and the happy effects which seem to have been produced on their conduct, leave little room to doubt that the divine blessing has attended the labours of these missionaries.

By letters received in October, 1805, from the Rev. John Sergeant, missionary to the New Stockbridge Indians near Oneida, it appears, that a very pleasing occurrence had lately taken place in that quarter. About a third part of the Oneida tribe of Indians, who had been avowed Pagans, had united themselves to Mr. Sergeant's congregation. The Indians also of the Delaware nation, who are numerous, and are considered as the head of the other tribes, "unanimously agreed to accept and take hold with both "hands" of the offer made to them of introducing among them "civilization and the Christian religion." They said, they were ready to receive both a minister and a schoolmaster.

Christianity is likely to flourish amongst the Mohawk Indians, by the active exertions of Mr. Norton, one of their chiefs^k, who, during a residence of some months in England in the years 1805 and 1806, translated the Gospel of St. John into that language, the printing of which was aided by "the British and Foreign Bible Society," and intended on his return to complete the New Testament, for the printing of which he has taken out a press to America.

In the island of Ceylon, Christianity, which had been established

^k The Indian name of this chief is Teyoninhokarawin.

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and cherished by the Dutch, had been much neglected after the English took possession of it, till the arrival of the Honourable Frederick North. He interested himself greatly in the diffusion of our holy religion; and, under his auspices, schools were established in each parish of the four districts, into which the British possessions are divided; in which the youth are instructed in reading and writing their own language, and in the principles of Christianity. There are two or three Clergymen in each of the principal districts, by whom divine service for Protestants is performed on Sundays, and one native preacher is stationed in each of the lesser districts: some of these latter are men of principle and ability, and extremely useful. At Columbo, also, there is a flourishing academy, divided into three schools, Cingalese, Malabar, and European: the children are taught the English as well as the native languages in the most perfect manner. The Cingalese are sons of their chiefs; and as they will be well grounded in Christian principles, their influence and example are likely to be productive of the most happy consequences¹.

Concluding
observations.

We have now in a very rapid and cursory manner traced the rise, progress, and decline, the revival and extension of Christianity in every quarter of the world, from its first promulgation to the present time. To dwell at length on the points which deserve attention, with reference to the inquiry with which this brief review is immediately connected, would be to anticipate the subjects of the following Dissertation. The light which they are calculated to throw on them will, it is presumed, be clearly perceived in their subsequent discussion. In the mean time, it is sufficient to observe,

¹ See Letter of a Clergyman in Ceylon, 1801. Appendix to the Third Report of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East.

that

that *the civilization of the world* has kept pace with *the progress of* C E N T.
our divine religion ; that Christian nations have in every age con- XIX.
sidered it to be *their duty to propagate it* in unenlightened regions;
that *success* has, for the most part, attended their endeavours,
when the *proper means* have been taken to secure it; and, that *the*
consequences of their exertions, in proportion as they have been
successful, have been uniformly *beneficial* to themselves, and pro-
ductive of the most important blessings to the favoured objects of
their benevolence.

A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY
IN ASIA.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

General observations on the Providence of God—Leading design of Divine Providence in the government of the world at large—Brief review of sacred and profane history in support of it—Objections to it answered—Transition to the British Oriental empire—Its rise and progress—Causes of its establishment—Probable design of the divine Providence in bestowing it—Political and religious advantages which have already resulted from it to Great Britain and India—Future civilization and moral improvement of Asia by the propagation of Christianity.

A
DISSERTATION, &c.

PART I.

ON THE PROBABLE DESIGN OF THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE
IN SUBJECTING SO LARGE A PORTION OF ASIA
TO THE BRITISH DOMINION.

“Tous les grands empires que nous avons vus sur la terre, ont concouru par divers moyens au bien de la Religion, et à la gloire de Dieu.”

Boffuet, Discours sur l'Histoire Univ. par. 3. chap. 1.

THAT the Almighty Creator of the Universe upholds by his preserving power the world which he has formed, directs it by his infinite wisdom, and governs it by his sovereign authority, is a truth, which is equally the dictate of natural, and of revealed religion. The acknowledgment of his superintending providence cannot, indeed, be justly separated from that of his existence and attributes. If we own the being of a God, the first Cause of all things, and ascribe to him the perfections of omniscience and omnipotence, it necessarily follows, that creation, in all its vast extent, together with the successive and infinitely diversified operations, events, and circumstances, which relate to it, must be open to his view, and subject to his control.

To

^aTo believers in divine revelation, and with such only we are concerned, it would, however, be wholly unnecessary to enter into any long and elaborate proof of this point. Every part of the sacred Volume contains declarations of the providence of God ; and one of its principal designs is, to confirm and illustrate that doctrine, with respect both to nations and individuals, by the facts which are there recorded. In the inspired writings, the great Author of all things is every where represented as being intimately present to the works of his creating hand. He alone appears as the supreme Disposer and Governor of the Universe, “ working “ all things after the counsel of his own will,” and doing “ what- “ soever pleaseth him in the armies of heaven, and amongst the “ inhabitants of the earth.” Without infringing, either on the justice and holiness of the Deity, or on the freedom and responsibility of man, the sacred writers uniformly describe the multiplied events of this lower world, as under the controlling influence of the divine Providence. To this directing cause, they attribute the rise and progress, the revolutions and successions, the decline and fall of states and empires ; and to this they refer the changing fortunes of families and individuals. From the government of the universe, according to their representations, chance is therefore altogether excluded. The conduct of his creatures, whether consonant or adverse to his revealed will, is, in various ways, overruled by the supreme Disposer of all things ^b. Whilst they are pursuing their own narrow and short-sighted schemes, the providence of God reduces the confused and discordant mass of human actions to order and harmony ; determines what is to them uncertain and contingent ; unites what is apparently unconnected ;

^a See note H.

^b See particularly on this subject the eloquent Conclusions of the Histories of Bossuet and Rollin.

bends to his own designs what might be very differently intended by man ; and out of this moral chaos, works the purposes of his own wisdom and goodness. ¹

Before we proceed to a more particular view of this subject, it may be important to advert to what appears to be the leading design of the divine Providence in the government of the world at large.

Without entering on the various questions which necessarily arise out of so extensive a subject, it will be sufficient for the purpose of the present inquiry to state, that the grand design of the Almighty, in the various dispensations of his providence from the beginning of the world, has, either immediately or remotely, borne a relation to the moral and religious improvement of mankind, by the introduction and establishment of the Christian religion. “ The history of redemption,” to adopt the language of an admirable writer ^c, “ is coeval with that of the globe itself, has “ run through every stage of its existence, and will outlast its ut- “ most duration.—The success of mighty conquerors, the policy “ of states, the destiny of empires, depend on the secret purpose of “ God in his Son Jesus ; *to whose honour all the mysterious work- “ ings of his providence are now, have hitherto been, and will for “ ever be, directed.*” The truth of this representation may be corroborated by an appeal to sacred history and the fulfilment of prophecy, and to the general history of the world ^d.

The separation of the family of Abraham from the surrounding nations, their miraculous departure out of Egypt, and the revelation of the divine will, which was made to their great Legislator,

^c Dr. Hurd, the present venerable Bishop of Worcester. See his Sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in the year 1781.

^d See note I.

amidst the thunders of mount Sinai ; the expulsion of the idolatrous inhabitants of Palestine, and the subsequent establishment of the Israelites in that promised land ; are alone decisive proofs of the providence of God, and of his design in forming that peculiar people. The same important truths are strikingly confirmed by the history of those heathen nations, which were either more or less connected with the Jews. These, according to the denunciations of the Jewish prophets, were made the instruments of executing the judgments of the Almighty against his rebellious people ; and were, in turn, themselves chastised for their own more flagrant idolatry and wickedness. But, in the midst of these desolating judgments, we may trace the hand of the divine Providence in the salutary effects which resulted from them ; in the radical cure of that propensity to idolatry^e, which, till the period of the Babylonish captivity, had marked the character of the Jewish people ; and in the dispersion of their sacred writings amongst their conquerors.

The series of prophecies, which describe the rise, progress, duration, and decline of those mighty empires, which successively arose in the world, and which, while they tended to diffuse civilization and knowledge, were ultimately designed to be subservient to the purposes of God concerning his Church, affords a further proof and illustration of the present argument. Before the termination of the Babylonish captivity, we may observe, in exact accordance with the predictions of the prophet Daniel, the overthrow of that formidable power, which had for ages oppressed the people of God, and the rise of a new empire, whose most celebrated monarch restored them to their country and their wor-

^e This has been denied, but apparently on insufficient grounds, by the late learned Bishop Horley, in his translation of Hosea.

ship ; and whose successors continued to protect them, till they also were overwhelmed by the resistless arms of the King of Macedon. The conquests of Alexander the Great, who, together with his immediate successors, regarded the Jewish people with peculiar favour, were followed by their establishment, not only in Alexandria and other parts of Egypt, but in the provinces of Upper Asia, Asia Minor, and Greece. Hence originated the necessity of the Septuagint translation of the Jewish Scriptures, and the consequent dissemination of the knowledge of the true God among the Gentiles, and the expectations of the Jews concerning the Messiah. Meanwhile, the fourth great empire of the world, which was destined to accomplish so important a part in promoting the civil and religious improvement of mankind, gradually, and almost imperceptibly, arose. In the plenitude of Roman greatness, when the principal nations of the earth were united in one vast empire, the greater part of them in a state of civilization ; when two celebrated languages almost universally prevailed, and the readiest intercourse was afforded from one extremity of its extensive territories to the other ; the long-expected Messenger of the Most High descended from heaven, to impart to mankind that knowledge, after which they had long been enquiring in vain, and which was essentially connected with their present and future welfare.

In what manner the providence of God may be discerned in the plantation of the Christian Church throughout the world, we have already seen^f. The circumstances of difficulty and opposition, amidst which the Gospel was first preached, the series of persecutions which its disciples sustained during the first three

^f See the Brief Historic View of the Propagation of Christianity, prefixed to this Dissertation.

hundred years after its introduction, by which the intrinsic virtue and excellence of Christianity were tried and illustrated ; its establishment under Constantine the Great, by which idolatry became almost entirely extinguished, and Christianity more widely dispersed and more firmly rooted, previous to the dismemberment of the empire ; the gradual conversion of the barbarous nations, by which it was punished for its former persecutions, and at length gradually subverted ; all proclaim the superintending providence of the Almighty Governor of the world, and his design, in the revolutions and fates of states and empires, of establishing and extending the Christian Church, for the moral improvement and happiness of mankind.

The conquests of Charlemagne, and the establishment of the new empire, were eventually productive of similar effects. The revival of literature, after the darkness of the middle ages, towards the close of the fifteenth century, which by exciting a spirit of inquiry and research, led the way to that important revolution in the Church, which took place in the succeeding century, may also be adduced in support of the present argument. Above all, the Reformation, which speedily extended itself over so great a part of Europe, is one of the most striking proofs of the reality of a divine Providence, and of its design in the changes of human affairs, which is afforded by the modern history of the world. The union of political and religious causes, which so remarkably characterized this great event, so far from weakening this view of it, tends greatly to illustrate and strengthen it ; by shewing in how remarkable a manner the great Ruler of the world can cause the various and discordant motives which actuate mankind, to concur in the fulfilment of his designs. In no country was this superintending conduct of the divine Providence, in the progress of the Reformation, more signally apparent, than in our own. Even the interruption,

ruption, which was given to the salutary work of reform during the temporary prevalence of bigotry and persecution, served only to root more deeply in the minds of men their opposition to Popery, and their zeal for Protestantism. The discovery of the New World, which added such distinguished lustre to the close of the fifteenth century, opened a new and splendid scene, in which the traces of the same divine superintendence are strikingly visible. In the colonization of North America, during the seventeenth century, by adventurers from this country, we may perceive the advancement of mankind in civilization, and the progress of that divine religion, which is the most powerful and successful instrument of promoting it.

To the preceding view of the providential government of the world, *some objections* may undoubtedly be made. It is certain, that, notwithstanding the evident design of the divine Providence in different ages of the world respecting the Christian Church, which has been before stated, the history of mankind presents various important events, which it is extremely difficult to reconcile with it. A formidable objection of this kind may be taken from the irruption and extensive dominion of Mohammedism in countries which had previously enjoyed the light of Christianity. But to this it may be replied, that the triumph of the Arabian imposture was both the natural effect, and the judicial punishment, of the corrupt state of the Eastern Church in the seventh century; that the contrast between Mohammedism and Christianity is a confirmation of the divine origin of the latter; and that we know not for what great and important purposes this Antichristian delusion has been permitted to prevail. The time, however, seems to be approaching, when the veil will be removed from this mysterious dispensation of divine Providence. The darkness and corruption

ruption of the middle ages, and the entire permission of the Papal apostasy ; the moral state of the great continents of Africa and of South America, may be further alleged in support of the objection in question.

In all these cases, the difficulty must certainly be admitted. But it is to be remembered, that similar objections may be made as to the partial distribution of natural and civil advantages, and the general constitution and course of nature. Every inquiry into the causes of the difficulties which thus occur both in the natural and in the moral world, ultimately resolves itself into the question concerning the origin of evil. It may be sufficient, therefore, to observe, that, notwithstanding the general design of the supreme Being respecting the happiness and improvement of his creatures, it is continually liable to be counteracted by their own folly and perverseness, and to be interrupted by the dispensations of his providence, for the purpose of punishing, correcting, and remedying the evils of which they have themselves been the authors. This consideration, together with that of our partial views and incapacity to determine concerning the whole system of the divine government, are the legitimate and decisive answers to the objections which have been thus briefly noticed.

But to resume our view of the operations of divine Providence.

The entire history of our highly favoured country forms one continued series of instances of divine superintendence^g; and in no part of it more remarkably than in that which relates to the extensive and flourishing empire which it has, during the last century, been gradually acquiring in the East.

^g See this subject admirably unfolded and illustrated by Mrs. H. More in her late work, "Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess," vol. ii. chap. 38, 39.

Scarcely one hundred years have elapsed, since the first commercial grant was made to the British merchants trading to India, by the Emperor Ferokfere. The descendant of that monarch, and the representative of the mighty Tamerlane, is *now* reduced to the humiliating necessity of deriving his sole protection and support from the power and the generosity of the British government. Early in the eighteenth century, the English and the French were nearly on an equality, as rivals and competitors for the superiority in India ; but within the short space of twenty years, from 1741 to 1760, the former had obtained so decided a preponderance, that the influence of the latter may be said to have been nearly annihilated. Subsequent attempts to recover their influence have been uniformly baffled and defeated, and have tended only to confirm and extend our oriental power. At the commencement of the same period, the English, in common with other European nations, held, by a precarious tenure, a few limited factorial possessions on the coast. Their territories at the present moment comprehend nearly one half of Hindustan, and the Decan, while their power and influence have become paramount over the whole peninsula. From Cape Comorin to the imperial city of Delhi, a tract of country two thousand five hundred miles in length, containing sixty millions of native inhabitants, the British dominion is sovereign and uncontrolled.

In taking even the most cursory view of the British empire in India, it is scarcely possible to avoid being struck with the contrast in its history which has been thus briefly exhibited, and with the extraordinary and rapid manner in which that empire has been acquired. *To what cause* are we to attribute the preeminence which it has thus obtained ? Much is, doubtless, to be ascribed to the prudence, the sagacity, the foresight of our governors ; to the skill of our military and naval commanders, and

to

to the undaunted bravery of our troops, in the various critical and arduous circumstances in which they have been engaged. But these are merely secondary and instrumental causes, the visible and human means by which the work has been accomplished. The view which has already been given of *the directing and controlling agency of the divine Providence* is sufficient to turn our attention to the first great cause of our East Indian successes. Without determining the justice, or assuming the divine approbation of our proceedings, we can be at no loss to whom to ascribe our unexampled progress in Asia. To that supreme Ruler, who holds in his hands the reins of the universe; who, as one of the proudest potentates the world ever saw was once compelled to acknowledge, regulates the destinies of states and kingdoms, must be attributed the empire which has been thus obtained. To Him must be ascribed the defeat of the counsels and the enterprises of our enemies; the almost uninterrupted successes of our policy and our arms; the wisdom and the courage which have marked our Oriental enterprises.

An obvious and important inquiry, however, arises out of the preceding representation, as to *the probable design of the divine Providence in subjecting so large a portion of Asia to the British dominion*. On no subject are we more liable to err, than in the opinions or the conjectures which we may venture to form concerning the intentions of the supreme Being. Clearly as the will of the Almighty is revealed to us in the Scriptures, it is chiefly confined to the general principles of the divine government, his dispositions towards his creatures, and the duties which he requires from them. Of his *ultimate designs* respecting either nations or individuals, no account is given, nor could it be justly expected. These are amongst "the secret things" which belong only to the most High. It is sufficient for us to be assured, that, though "clouds and darknesses

“nefs are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” What, therefore, may be *the secret and final design* of the divine Providence in bestowing upon Great Britain so extensive an Oriental dominion, and what *the remote consequences* of its existence and continuance, as foreseen by the mind of that glorious Being, “known unto whom are all his works from the beginning of the world,” it would be equally presumptuous and vain to inquire. To such researches it may be justly said, “He that presseth into the light shall be oppressed with glory.” The duty and the interest of man are of a humbler nature. From the general declarations of holy Writ, illustrated and confirmed as they are by the history of former ages, and the events which are passing before our eyes, sufficient light may be afforded to guide us both to a safe and beneficial conclusion. We have taken a brief and rapid survey of the ways of Providence from the earliest ages. We have before us, in the clear and unimpeachable page of sacred history, a long and uninterrupted series of dispensations, by which the great empires of the world were made successively to promote the general civilization and happiness of mankind, and, more especially, to advance the progress of true religion in the world. The avarice and ambition of heathen monarchs, under the controlling influence of the supreme Disposer, have unwillingly been made to bend to the accomplishment of his wise and benevolent designs. Causes and instruments apparently the most adverse and unconnected, and events seemingly the most untoward, have been rendered the means of producing effects the most beneficial and important to the human race.

What, then, is the conclusion which obviously results from these considerations? Can it be, that the divine Providence has in such a remarkable manner subjected so large a portion of Asia

to the British dominion, merely for the purpose of gratifying the pride or the ambition of our country; of aggrandizing our power, our wealth, or our resources? Nay, even of opening to us, by the extension of our commerce, the means of more successfully resisting, in the present perilous and critical times, the formidable and increasing power of our European enemy? Was it for this only, that it has pleased the Almighty Ruler of the nations, to watch over the rising interests of Great Britain in the East, to foster its infant settlements, to protect them from the secret machinations, and the open attacks, of their inveterate foes; to dispose the native princes of India in general to prefer the British alliance; to bestow on the plains of ^bPlassey, Porto-Novo, and Delhi, victories, which equal the most celebrated military exploits of ancient or of modern times; and, by the combination of these circumstances, to give so early and decided a superiority to Great Britain, not only over the French, but over every other rival power in India? With the principles which have been before laid down, and the means which we possess of ascertaining their truth, we cannot, surely, be induced to form so arrogant and so limited a conclusion. We may, indeed, and we ought, gratefully to acknowledge the important political and commercial advantages, which result to this country from our Oriental dominion, more particularly in the present extraordinary situation of Europe; but it ill becomes us to limit our views to considerations of this nature.

“ Providence,” to use the language of Sir William Jones, “ has thrown these Indian territories into the arms of Britain, for their protection and welfareⁱ,” and they have already derived

^b The celebrated victories obtained by Lord Clive, Sir Eyre Coote, and Lord Lake.

ⁱ See Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones, Vol. II. p. 337.

invaluable blessings from her. They have passed from the barbarous and oppressive despotism of their Mohammedan conquerors, to the mild, and equitable, and salutary government of this island. Encouragement has been afforded, by the British commerce, for the exercise of their industry in arts, manufactures, and agriculture. The great body of the people have been rescued from the arbitrary and insatiable exactions of native governors and magistrates; and, instead of an annually varying tribute, exacted often at the discretion of the public officers, and increasing with the ability of the landholder to pay it, the amount of the revenue demanded by the Company has been fixed in perpetuity, leaving to the economy, skill, and industry of individuals, all the benefit derivable from the exertion of those qualities.

The regular and impartial administration of justice is another eminent advantage, which has resulted to India from her subjection to Great Britain. To estimate the full value of this advantage, we must recollect the corruption which very generally pervaded the courts of justice under Mohammedan authority; in which the influence of power and wealth was irresistible to so intolerable a degree, that the poor could rarely obtain redress for the most flagrant injuries committed by a powerful or rich oppressor. The administration of civil, criminal, and even financial jurisdiction was frequently vested in the same person. At all times, the distribution of justice was too much subject to the discretion of the judge; and the record of his proceedings, when made, was summary and imperfect. Instead of this vexatious and indefinite course, a regular system has been established. The functions of the civil judge are separated from those of the local magistrate; the proceedings of both, as well as those of the courts for the trial of criminal causes, are regulated by fixed rules; and a correct re-

cord of them is preserved. A system of appeal in civil suits has been instituted ; the proceedings in criminal causes, where the sentence affects the life or liberty of the convict beyond a limited period, are subject to the revision of a superior court, before the sentence can be executed ; and the regulations, by which all act, are published in the native languages. The British government, agreeably to the dictates of a wise policy, has adopted the criminal code of the Mohammedans, which it found established, and which is not only more familiar, but better suited to the natives, than our own : but it has, at the same time, abolished the more sanguinary punishments of impaling, and the amputation of limbs. Civil causes relating to Caste and inheritance are tried by the respective laws of Hindus and Mohammedans. The justly celebrated Digest of Hindu and Mohammedan Law^k, which was compiled under the direction of Sir William Jones, a labour which endeared him to the natives, while it tended to shorten his invaluable life, has contributed most essentially to the due administration of justice. Various other Indian and Mohammedan law-tracts have been translated, and every precaution, which a sound policy could suggest, has been adopted to ensure this great object, to prevent impositions, and to correct erroneous judgments ; and it may be truly asserted, that the bulk of the people derive a security in their persons and property from these measures, which they never enjoyed under any former government.

Many other important benefits have resulted to the natives of India, in consequence of the British government. A degree of order and tranquillity prevails in the neighbourhood of the English settlements, which was before unknown ; while the employment and the regular payment of the labouring classes have en-

^k See, relative to this important work, Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones, Vol. II. pp. 180, 262, 344.

abled multitudes of them to support themselves and their families in circumstances of comfort, experienced in no other part of the country. Various public works have been executed, and charitable institutions formed, by the British government in India, which have largely contributed to the relief and comfort of the natives ; and in times of scarcity, its foresight and liberality have been the means of rescuing thousands of its wretched subjects from the miserable effects of famine¹. It is, also, undeniable, that a beneficial influence has been gradually extending itself over the inhabitants of India, in consequence of their intercourse with the British ; by which their social habits and manners have been materially improved. The distinctions which are occasioned by their religious faith do, indeed, preclude them from fully participating in this advantage. Yet, notwithstanding these obstacles to a more intimate union, some benefit has imperceptibly been imparted, and is daily increasing in extent and importance.

The preceding observations may be sufficient to shew, that great and numerous advantages *of a political nature* have already resulted both to Great Britain and India, from the intimate connection which subsists between them. But this is neither all, nor is it, probably, the chief point, to which it was the intention of the proposer of the present question to direct the public attention. Reciprocal benefits, *of a moral and religious nature*, have also partly accrued to both countries by their mutual intercourse, and still greater are justly expected to follow. Hitherto, it must be confessed, the preponderance of advantage, perhaps of every kind, has been greatly in favour of Britain. Even in a *religious* point of view, we have some obligations to acknowledge to our Oriental

¹ See on this subject a very interesting extract from an address of Sir James M'Intosh to the Grand Jury of Bombay, in Dr. Tennant's Thoughts on the British Government in India, p. 115.

dominions. Indian chronology, history, and mythology, were, it is well known, during many years, considered as the strong hold of French infidelity; and even amongst ourselves, there were not wanting writers who favoured the delusion, by sceptical dissertations on those subjects¹. But, as it has been observed by a distinguished writer, “there is a Providence which controls all human events, and brings good out of evil: and it is this Providence which seems to have permitted the attacks of infidelity, in order to give greater evidence to the faith it opposes^m.” It cannot, therefore, be esteemed a trifling or unimportant advantage, notwithstanding the numerous and irrefragable evidences in favour of Christianity, that our connexion with India has for ever dispelled this delusion; that it has proved, beyond all possibility of doubt, that the Indian records, so far from opposing or undermining the foundations of the Mosaic or the Christian dispensation, have added to the proofs already possessed of their divine origin, that which arises from several remarkable coincidences, and other direct and indirect evidences in support of both, from the Hindu records. The indefatigable exertions, first, of Sir William Jones, and his fellow labourers, in the mine of Indian literature and science, and, afterwards, of the learned members of the College of Fort William, have placed this point beyond all doubtⁿ, and have thus been instruments of conferring a most important benefit on the Christian world.

Have we, then, nothing to offer to India in return for this advantage? Some feeble and limited efforts have, as we have seen^o, been made to impart to her natives the blessings of Christianity;

¹ See particularly the Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, by Mr. Halhed.

^m Dr. White, Bampton Lectures, Sermon I. page 40.

ⁿ On this subject, a passage in Dr. Buchanan’s Memoir may be advantageously consulted, page 44.

^o See Brief Historic View prefixed.

but as a general and national work, it remains, as yet, unattempted. It may, perhaps, be the design of the divine Providence, in granting us so extensive an Oriental dominion, to place us, as we know is the case with respect to all other advantages, whether civil or religious, in a situation of trial^p, to observe what course we will take as to the diffemination of Christian principles. The circumstances of our connexion with India are, however, too striking to require any laboured exposition of this point. Great Britain is, at this time, the nation which possesses in the greatest purity, accompanied by the greatest zeal, the Christian religion. What, therefore, is the conclusion to be drawn from her situation with respect to India? Is it not, to say the least, highly probable, that the providence of God, which we have seen so remarkably exercised for this purpose in former ages, should at this time bring so large a portion of Asia, as it were, *into contact* with this enlightened nation, *for the very purpose* of exciting us to the honourable undertaking of imparting to it, in addition to political advantages, the moral and religious blessings which we enjoy? and, that from India, as from a centre of communication and influence, the same inestimable benefits may be diffused throughout the continent of Asia?

It may be further argued, that the dereliction or the deprivation of Christian principles, which has been witnessed on the continent of Europe since the French revolution, and which, notwithstanding the reestablishment of the Roman Catholic faith in France, continues, it is to be feared, too nearly the same, indicate to us, who have been preserved from the general contamination of infidelity, and who exhibit, beyond all question, the purest example of a Christian Church now existing in the world, the direction of divine Providence, to testify both our gratitude and our zeal, by

^p See Bishop Butler's Analogy.

attempting

attempting to establish in our Oriental empire the faith which we have cherished in Europe, and which has elsewhere been so deplorably abandoned or corrupted.

The very local situation of that empire may be allowed to have some influence on our minds. “The great scene of revelation,” to adopt the glowing expressions of a learned and eloquent writer^a already referred to, “has been the East. There the source of genuine inspiration was first opened; and from thence the streams of divine knowledge began to flow. It was the grand theatre, on which the Almighty Governor of the world made bare his arm, and, by signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds, established the conviction of his righteous providence and supreme dominion in the hearts of men. There he led the people of Israel like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron; there the Prophets uttered their predictions; and there the Son of God illustrated and fulfilled them. But there, also, has the impostor Mahomet erected his standard; that standard to which thousands have flocked, with an ardour which may well raise a blush on the countenances of too many who pretend to fight under the banner of the cross.” There also, if we may presume to add any thing to so eloquent a passage, the yet more ignorant, though scarcely more deluded and debased, votaries of Brahma have, through the still longer lapse of ages, groaned beneath the fetters of the Caste, and been enslaved by the most abject idolatry and superstition.

We owe, then, a debt of gratitude to the East, as the primæval source of nature and revelation, which we have hitherto been tardy in acknowledging. The Oriental world has, indeed, witnessed the triumphs of our arms, the successes of our policy, and the general mildness and equity of our civil and judicial ad-

^a Dr. White, Bampton Lectures, Sermon I. page 42.

ministration.

ministration. But a higher destiny yet awaits us. Providence is evidently calling us to services still more glorious and important, because still more directly coincident with the designs of infinite Wisdom, and more immediately connected with the happiness of mankind. To the British government is the distinguished opportunity presented, of erecting in India, and throughout Asia, the banner of the Cross ; of rescuing from the darkness of Hindu and Mohammedan superstition the millions which are now involved in it ; and of causing the “ Day-Spring from on high ” to visit them.

Every circumstance which can be adduced leads us almost necessarily to this conclusion. The general design of the Almighty in the government of the world, which we have already noticed ; our extensive and uncontrolled dominion in India ; the increased confidence and lessening prejudices of the natives ; our more intimate acquaintance with their religion, laws, literature, and science ; and the very direction of the public attention to this subject at the present time ; all concur in shewing the leading design of the divine Providence, in subjecting so large a portion of Asia to our dominion, to be *the diffusion of Christian knowledge* amongst the many millions of its unenlightened inhabitants, as the means of promoting their temporal and eternal welfare and happiness. They point out, at all events, the nature of *our duty*, which is, perhaps, the best and nearest indication of the divine will which can either be expected or desired.

A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY
IN ASIA.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.

General observations on the introduction of Religion into conquered countries—Roman policy—that of Constantine, and of succeeding Christian Princes—Conduct of the Mohammedan conquerors—that of the Roman Catholic kingdoms of Europe. Duty of Great Britain to promote Christianity in the East, on the ground of religious obligation—of its power and opportunity—of the moral state of the natives of Hindustan, and of other Asiatic countries—and of the benefits which would result from it both to Great Britain and Asia—Difficulties and impediments as to the execution of this work—Practicability of accomplishing it.

A

DISSERTATION, &c.

PART II.

ON THE DUTY, MEANS, AND CONSEQUENCES OF TRANSLATING THE SCRIPTURES INTO THE ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, AND OF PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE IN ASIA.

“ —What can be called good and NECESSARY by Christians, if it be not so, to support Christianity where it must otherwise sink, and propagate it where it must otherwise be unknown ; to restrain abandoned, barefaced vice ; and to take care of the education of such children, as otherwise must be even educated in wickedness, and trained up to destruction ?” BISHOP BUTLER.

CHAP. I.

The Duty of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental languages, and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia.

THE fate of conquered nations respecting religion has varied, according to the principles and the policy of the victorious power. In one point, conquerors of all ages have unhappily agreed; namely, in consulting, in the first instance, the establishment of their own

own authority, and the advancement of their own interest; and in considering the welfare of the vanquished only as a secondary object. Religion, therefore, in common with every other circumstance relative to their new subjects, has been treated with indifference, persecuted, or encouraged, according to the political views of the victors.

The policy of the Roman Republic led her to consider the various superstitions of the countries successively subdued by her irresistible arms, as a mere adventitious circumstance, like that of language or colour, which could neither tend materially to consolidate, nor to lessen or undermine, her newly acquired power. The conquered provinces were left in the undisturbed worship of their several gods, and in the enjoyment of their religious observances. This was a line of conduct perfectly consonant to the nature of Polytheism, and evidently dictated by sound policy. Their own idolatrous system had nothing in it of the jealous and dignified exclusion of true religion. On the contrary, it readily assimilated itself to the multiplied errors of other nations; and the union tended to promote the intercourse and to cement the interests of both.

When Christianity was introduced into the world, its first requisition to the Gentile nations was the utter renunciation of their former deities, together with every trace of their idolatrous worship, and superstitious practices. Hence arose the opposition which Christianity every where met with, and the long series of persecutions which it endured during the three first centuries. On its establishment, however, as the religion of the empire, Constantine, and his immediate successors, shewed a laudable zeal in abolishing the Gentile idolatry, and effecting a general profession

profession of Christianity. And for many succeeding ages it continued to be the aim, as it was the undoubted policy, of Christian sovereigns, to convert their heathen subjects, whether native or conquered, and to promote Christian knowledge in their dominions^a. It is true, that in these attempts they were frequently unwise, not to say sometimes iniquitous, in their choice of means to effect them; but the general principle of their conduct was, undoubtedly, both just and benevolent.

The Mohammedan conquerors, as it is well known, invariably propagated the delusions of their impostor, wherever they carried their victorious arms; and firmly established the religion of the Koran in every conquered country.

The Roman Catholic kingdoms of Europe had no sooner founded their extensive empires in the New World, than they provided for the continuance of the faith amongst their European subjects, and for the conversion of the natives, by an ecclesiastical establishment, and by missions from several of the monastic orders. In Asia, also, similar establishments were formed, coeval with their settlements; and although the Oriental empires both of the Spaniards and Portuguese are in a state of ruin, the Romish Church and its revenues remain in a great measure unimpaired.

Great Britain alone, the most eminent of the Protestant kingdoms of Europe, has hitherto been unmindful of the religious state of her Eastern empire, and has delayed to acknowledge the debt of gratitude which she owes to that superintending Pro-

^a See Brief Historic View prefixed.

vidence, by which her power has been attained. On the continent of America, and in her West India islands, ecclesiastical establishments have been provided, and some attempts have been made towards the conversion and instruction of the aboriginal natives. In India alone has she withheld this just and salutary assistance^b. A scanty and ill supplied establishment of Chaplains is all that has yet been afforded for her European subjects ; whilst the natives, with the exception of the Protestant missions before mentioned, have been left to the influence of their unhallowed and destructive superstitions, without any direct effort having been made to improve their moral and religious condition.

I. It can scarcely be doubted, by any one who acknowledges the divine authority of Christianity, whether it be *the duty* of a nation professing the purity of its holy faith, to extend the knowledge of it to any country, which, by the favour of divine Providence, may be subjected to its dominion. It is clearly a duty, not only resulting from the positive precepts, but flowing from the very nature and spirit of Christianity.

The command to love our neighbour as ourselves, which is interpreted by our divine Lawgiver himself to include all mankind, together with that of acting towards others as we would wish them to act towards us, are alone sufficient to establish this point. But, to adopt the sentiments of a great writer^c, “ Christianity is “ very particularly to be considered as *a trust*, deposited with us “ in behalf of others; in behalf of mankind, as well as for our

^b See Dr. Buchanan’s Memoir, part i. chap. 1, 2.

^c Bishop Butler. Sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

“ own instruction. No one has a right to be called a Christian,
 “ who doth not do somewhat in his station, towards the discharge
 “ of this trust ; who doth not, for instance, assist in keeping up
 “ the profession of Christianity where he lives. And it is an ob-
 “ ligation but little more remote, to assist in doing it in our
 “ factories abroad ; and in the colonies to which we are related,
 “ by their being peopled from our own mother-country, and be-
 “ ing subjects to the same government with ourselves: *and nearer*
 “ *yet is the obligation upon such persons in particular, as have the*
 “ *intercourse of an advantageous commerce with them. The like*
 “ *charity (i. e. of religious instruction) we owe to the natives ; owe*
 “ *to them in a much stricter sense than we are apt to consider,*
 “ *were it only from neighbourhood, and our having gotten posses-*
 “ *sions in their country.* We are most strictly bound to consider
 “ these poor unformed creatures, as being in all respects of one
 “ family with ourselves, the family of mankind ; and instruct them
 “ in our ‘ common salvation :’ that they may not pass through
 “ this stage of their being like brute beasts ; but be put into a ca-
 “ pacity of moral improvements, how low soever they must re-
 “ main as to others, and so into a capacity of qualifying them-
 “ selves for an higher state of life hereafter.” It is not, therefore,
 left to our opinion or choice, whether, when we have the oppor-
 tunity, we should endeavour to disseminate Christian principles,
 upon a larger or a smaller scale. It is *a duty* enforced by the aw-
 ful sanctions of our religion ; the wilful neglect of which is both
 an act of disobedience to God, and a breach of charity to man.

Christian kings and governors are intended to be the instru-
 ments, under God, of protecting his Church, and of promot-
 ing his gracious designs in extending it throughout the world.
 In the language of a sacred prophet, they are destined to be its

“nursing fathers;” and as Christianity is, from its nature and constitution, designed to be universal in its extent, the powers which submit to its authority, and profess to value its blessings, are bound by the most solemn obligations, to encourage the propagation of it by all lawful means, in countries over which they exercise a voluntary dominion, as well as to maintain it in those in which it is already established.

It has, indeed, been said, that we have *no right* to interfere with the religion of other nations; that it is unjust and illiberal to oppose or disturb them in their modes of faith; much more, to take any effectual measures for engaging them to embrace our own. So far as this objection respects independent countries, or those which, although agreeing in the main points of the religion itself, differ from the existing government as to matters of inferior importance, or the adoption, in either or any case, of violent, compulsory, and persecuting measures, it may be readily granted. But if it be referred, as in the present case, to territories subject to the dominion of a Christian country, the natives of which are involved in the darkness of a superstition, which, as it is impossible to deny, is productive of the most pernicious consequences, the objection can only arise from principles of infidelity, or from total indifference to religion. Such a nation has not only a right to interfere with the religion of its subject-provinces, but it is its paramount duty to take every measure, which a mild and enlightened policy can suggest, for emancipating them from the misery of their idolatrous practices.

The obligation to this important work is greatly increased, if to these considerations be added those which arise from *the circumstances of time and opportunity*, the combination of which, as

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we have already observed, forms a striking indication of the design of divine Providence in our connection with Asia^d.

II. The argument, however, in support of *the duty* of a nation professing Christianity to promote the knowledge of it in countries subject to its power, may be strongly enforced by the consideration of *the political and moral state of the inhabitants* of those countries.

It has been customary with European authors to extol the ancient civilization, and to represent in glowing colours the virtues, and the improved state, of the natives of India. Traces undoubtedly exist in their remaining works of art, science, and literature, which seem to prove, that “^e how degenerate and debased soever “ the Hindus may now appear, in some early age, they were “ splendid in arts and arms, happy in government, wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge.” It is certain, also, that, “ in spite of their many revolutions and conquests, their “ sources of wealth are still abundant, and that in many of their “ manufactures they still surpass all the world.” Yet, notwithstanding this flattering testimony of our illustrious Orientalist, there is no appearance, that, with respect to the great body of the people, India at any former time greatly excelled that degree of civilization, such as it is, which exists at this day. The celebrated historian of America, in his elaborate Disquisition concerning Ancient India, has, in a similar manner, produced satisfactory evidence of the high degree of excellence to which the ancient Hindus had attained in various species of manufacture, and in many

^d The peculiar *advantages and facilities* now possessed by Great Britain for promoting Christian knowledge in Asia will be hereafter stated.

^e See Sir William Jones’s Dissertation on the Hindus.

of the necessary and ornamental arts of life. Their advances, also, in science and literature, in philosophy, morals, and religion, are described in glowing colours. These representations, however, must be received with considerable allowance, even so far as they respect the higher classes of the Hindus: but as to the great body of the people, who, as he seems to think, are, even now, advanced far beyond the inhabitants of the two other quarters of the globe in improvement, they are manifestly erroneous.

“ It is true,” observes the learned proposer of the present subject^f, “ that the natives excel in the manual arts of their cast; “ and that some of them, particularly those who are brought up “ amongst Europeans, acquire a few ideas of civility and general “ knowledge. But the bulk of the common people, from Cape “ Comorin to Thibet, are not an improved people. Go into a vil- “ lage, within five miles of Calcutta, and you will find an ignorance “ of letters and of the world, an intellectual debility, a wretched- “ ness of living, and a barbarism of appearance, which by every “ account, (making allowance for our regular government, and “ plentiful country,) are not surpassed among the natives in the “ interior of Africa, or back settlements of America^g.” Although the latter part of this description will probably be thought too strong, another eye-witness of their manners has observed, that the poverty, depression, and general ignorance of the Hindus are the features of their condition, which first strike the attention of every stranger^h. These evils necessarily flow from the structure of their political society. The arbitrary division of the Hindus

^f Memoir, note G. p. 110.

^g See Park and Mackenzie.

^h Tennant's Thoughts, p. 72.

into four distinct Castes, operates as a permanent check to the improvement of their condition, and condemns the great body of the people to poverty and wretchedness. These unnatural distinctions of classes deprive them of every motive to industry and exertion. The most honourable and virtuous conduct secures no reward to a person of the lower Castes, and those of the higher order lose no reputation or privilege by being ignorant and vicious. The whole community being thus deprived both of hope and fear, the great motives of human action, its different orders are contented to remain in the condition in which they are placed, and every avenue to improvement is effectually precluded.

The moral character of the Hindus has been as much mistaken as their progress in civilization. A mild, benevolent, and inoffensive disposition has been attributed to them, which more intimate knowledge and experience have unhappily disproved. The chief quality resembling virtue, which characterizes the Hindus, is a certain apathy or hebetude of mind, which renders them submissive to authority. But this is obviously a quality which fits them equally for the reception of vicious impressions, and indisposes them to the exercise of any virtuous energy. “Those who have known them,” says Dr. Buchanan, “for the longest time, concur in declaring, that neither truth, nor honesty, honour, gratitude, nor charity, is to be found pure in the breast of a Hindu.” The testimonies which he adduces in support of this opinion must be allowed to be unquestionable^k. Other competent witnesses have not hesitated to assert, that avarice, lying, perfidiousness, cruelty, indolence, and servility, are the predominant

^k See them detailed in his Memoir, note I. particularly those of Tamerlane and Mr. Holwell.

features of the Hindu character¹. “*Avarice*,” says a learned and elegant historian^m, “is the predominant passion of the Hindu; and all his wiles, address, cunning, and perseverance, of which he is so exquisite a master, are exerted to the utmost in fulfilling the dictates of this vice.” The crime of *perjury* is so remarkably prevalent among them, that Sir William Jones, notwithstanding his strong prejudice in their favour, after long judicial experience, was obliged reluctantly to acknowledge this moral depravity of the natives of India.

These concurring testimonies are decisive of the question; and may serve to correct the mistaken opinions which the enthusiastic representations of theoretical writers have disseminated in Europe, and to remove one of the most prevalent and powerful objections against any attempt to improve the natives of Hindustan.

The causes of this debased state of the moral character in the Hindus may evidently be traced partly to the despotic form of the government under which they have lived, but principally to their

¹ See the Preface to Mr. Gilchrist’s English and Hindustani Dictionary, and a Letter from an intelligent Resident in India to Dr. Vincent, in the Proceedings of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge for the year 1800.

^m Mr. Orme. “Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire.” The general impression which was left on the mind of this impartial writer, after a minute exposition of the character and institutions of the Hindus, is expressed in the following striking and dignified language: “Christianity vindicates all its glories, all its honours, and all its reverence, when we behold the most horrid impieties avowed amongst the nations on whom its influence does not shine, as actions necessary in the common conduct of life: I mean poisonings, treachery, and assassination among the sons of ambition, rapine, cruelty, and extortion in the ministers of justice. I leave divines to vindicate, by more sanctified reflexions, the cause of their religion and their God.”

ignorance,

ignorance, idolatry, and superstition. However sublime some of the ideas may be concerning the supreme Being, which have been found in the sacred writings of the Hindus, the representations of the gods, before which the Brahmin and the multitude indiscriminately worship, are but too descriptive of the nature of the superstition with which their idolatry is connected. Every part of the Hindu mythology, however it may contain some vestiges of primæval tradition, is compounded of falsehood and immorality; and their religious rites consist of little more than licentiousness and cruelty. *The former*, by the very symbols of their deities, is admitted as a systematic principle in the ceremonies of the Hindus, as it was in the mysteries of the Greeks and Romans; and is upheld by the profligate establishments of some of their most sacred temples; “the last effort,” as it has been justly observed, “of mental depravity, in the invention of a superstition, to blind the understanding, and to corrupt the heart.”

Of the *cruelty* of the Hindu superstition, the proofs have been too long before the public, to require any additional confirmation. Dreadful as the rites of other idolatrous nations have been, they have been equalled, if not exceeded, by those which are practised amongst the natives of Hindustan. Even at the very period, which some authors have fixed upon as the æra of their civilization and refinement, it is certain, that human sacrifices were offered by the Hindus; and although these have nominally ceasedⁿ, they still adhere to many superstitious practices, which either inflict immediate death, or directly tend to it. Of the Sahamoron, or the burning of widows with their deceased husbands, a practice common to all parts of Hindustan, it is sufficient to say, that according

ⁿ See, however, note K.

to the calculation ° of a late learned member^p of the Asiatic Society, the number of widows who thus perish self-devoted in the northern provinces of Hindustan alone, is not less than 10,000 annually : other computations state the numbers of these deluded victims to be 30,000, or even 50,000, annually, in the whole extent of India. Nor is this the only superstitious practice by which the lives of their wretched votaries are endangered or required. The natives of Hindustan, particularly the inhabitants of Orissa, and of the eastern parts of Bengal, sometimes make offerings of their children to the goddess Gunga, and devote to her their firstborn, by encouraging the unhappy child to walk into the river Ganges, till it is carried away by the stream. This species of human sacrifice was publicly committed at the island of Saugor, and at other places reputed holy, at certain stated seasons : but in the year 1802, this inhuman practice was abolished by an express regulation of the British government, and declared to be murder, punishable with death. Infants, who refuse their mother's milk, are, however, still frequently exposed on trees in baskets, and devoured by birds of prey ; and amongst a race of Hindus called Rajputs, the mothers starve their female infants to death q.

Persons of either sex, who, from whatever cause, may be in distress, sometimes devote themselves to a voluntary death, by plunging into the river Ganges, at the places reputed holy. At the Puja of the Rutt Jattrā, many put an end to their existence, by falling under the wheels of a heavy wooden car, containing their gods. This is chiefly practised at Jaggernaut, where they

* See note L.

^p William Chambers, Esq.

^q Asiatic Researches, Vol. IV. p. 333.

sometimes lie down in the track of this machine a few hours before its arrival, and, taking a soporiferous draught, hope to meet death asleep. Persons supposed to be dying, particularly if they are aged, are removed from their beds, and carried to the brink of the Ganges; where, amidst the agonies of departing nature, they are half immersed in the river, while torrents of water are poured by the by-standers upon the wretched victims of their superstition, who seldom survive the operation many hours.

Of the various religious tortures which are commonly practised by the Hindus, more particularly on the last five days of the month Chytra, under the denomination of the Chorruck Puja, the following may be sufficient to mention: that of swinging with hooks passed through the integuments of the back; of dancing with threads, canes, or bamboos, passed through the sides; of thrusting spits, or other instruments of iron, through the tongue or forehead; of falling from a height on sharp instruments; of swinging over a fire; of climbing naked a tree armed with thorns. At other times, numbers are found measuring, with their naked bodies trained over burning sands, the ground lying between one pagoda and another, distant, perhaps, many leagues; or bearing, with fixed eyes, the rays of the meridian sun. These, with other practices and penances equally tremendous, are the means by which the infatuated worshippers of Brahma hope to conciliate the favour of the Deity, and to obtain the blessings of immortality; and these may serve to give some idea of *the cruelty* which characterizes the Hindu superstition.

That such a system of idolatry and superstition should produce the worst effects on *the morals* of the people, is inevitable. This

has already appeared from their general character. The Hindu system has, in fact, *no regard to morality*. Superstitious observances and largesses to the Brahmins usurp the place of piety, justice, and mercy; and are considered as expiatory of the most flagrant violations of moral conduct. The sanctions of their religion, although future, are not eternal; and in the penances which it enjoins, the classification of crimes is altogether unequal: indifferent actions are punished equally with the most injurious; the omission of ceremonies, with the most immoral actions. No provision is made for *the moral instruction* of the great body of the people. To them the Vedas, and even the Puranas, are as a dead letter, as sealed books. But very few can read the former, and fewer understand them; and with respect to the Caste of the multitude, that is, the Suders, and the still more wretched tribe of the Pariars, they are held in contempt and abhorrence by the Brahmins; it is even a crime to instruct them. Add to this, that the Fakeers, or religious mendicants, who chiefly consist of thieves and insolvent debtors, and are said to be not less in number than 110,000 in Hindustan, are too often the public and licensed corrupters of the morals of the people.

It may, perhaps, be said, that the Mohammedans, who are supposed, whether accurately or not, it is unnecessary in this place to inquire, to form one tenth part of the inhabitants of Hindustan, are a more improved and civilized race. But, although some of the grosser features of idolatry have been removed by Mohammedism, that imposture has substituted but little of what is better in their stead. Though theists, the Mohammedans are not practically more moral than the Hindus. They are in general dissolute and abandoned; more intractable and insolent than the Hindus, and even still less to be confided in. Most of them are
ignorant

ignorant of the Koran, and entertain a contempt for learning, yet despise the rest of mankind. Unlike the Hindus, they are zealous in making profelytes, and partake of the political bigotry and intolerance, which have ever characterized their faith.

The actual state, therefore, both civil and religious, of the natives of Hindustan, whether Mohammedans or Hindus, is, to a high degree, wretched and deplorable. Enslaved by a cruel and immoral superstition, or deluded by a fierce and barbarous imposture, even the best informed and most civilized among them are distinguished by a degree of ignorance of moral and religious principles, and by dispositions and conduct, which would disgrace the lowest and meanest rank of people in any Christian country; whilst the multitude, though ingenious in manufactures, and patient of control, are but little removed, in point of moral improvement, from the most uncivilized of mankind.

The same melancholy view which is thus given of the natives of Hindustan is equally applicable, with slight and unimportant variations, to the other great states of Asia. Over the vast extent of the Turkish Asiatic empire, the peninsula of Arabia, the kingdom of Persia, and the territory of Independent Tartary, and amongst the innumerable tribes which inhabit the shores of the Caspian, and the ridges of Mount Caucasus, the imposture of Mohammed reigns triumphant. Throughout the remaining regions of the great continent of Asia; in the island of Ceylon, in Tibet, the Birman empire, Siam, the vast empire of China, and the islands of Japan, the religion of Buddha^t, which, though differing in some important particulars, bears notwithstanding a near affinity to that

^t See note M.

of the Hindus, together with some other forms of idolatry and superstition, universally prevail. Even in Asiatic Russia, Christianity has not yet made any material progress amongst the natives; who are submissive either to the Mohammedan or Buddhist faith.

To the eye of a reflecting observer, the moral review of this celebrated portion of the globe is humiliating and lamentable. During a long course of ages, the innumerable inhabitants of many of its fairest regions, some of which were honoured with the first communication from heaven, and others with the final revelation of the divine will, have been involved "in darkness and the shadow of death," have lived and died ignorant of their Creator, strangers to the blessings of true religion, "without God and without hope in the world." Can arguments be wanting, after this faint representation of their moral condition, to persuade a great and generous nation, enjoying the pure and benign light of Christianity, and, above all, possessing, by the evident interposition of divine Providence, an extensive empire amidst these benighted regions, that it is *its duty* to seize the opportunity which is afforded to it, of diffusing amongst its subjects the knowledge and the blessings of the Christian faith? Every motive of gratitude for the distinguishing favour of Heaven towards ourselves, and of justice, compassion, and love, to our Asiatic brethren; whose happiness we are bound to consult as much as that of any other body of British subjects, urges us to avail ourselves of the exalted privilege of leading them to participate in our own inestimable advantages.

III. The duty of promoting Christian knowledge amongst our Indian subjects rests simply and decisively on *our obligations* as a Christian

Christian nation. We have seen, however, that this consideration is greatly heightened by their political and moral condition, and by the dominion which we have acquired, and exercise over them. It will be still further confirmed, by a reference to *the benefits* which would result, both to the natives and to the British government, from the introduction of Christianity into Asia.

Who can entertain a doubt upon this subject, that attentively considers the nature and tendency of our holy religion? Last in the order of the divine dispensations, preceded by a peculiar œconomy, and by a long course of ages, during which the world was preparing for its reception, it appeared, at length, as the great concluding gift of God to mankind, intended and calculated to supply their spiritual wants, to alleviate their temporal miseries, and to promote their present and future happiness.

To a world abandoned to idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, Christianity revealed the character and will of the one living and true God, as a Being of infinite wisdom, purity, and goodness. It made known his purposes of mercy to mankind through the mediation of his Son Jesus Christ; disclosed the terms of forgiveness and acceptance with him, through faith in the doctrines, and obedience to the commands of the Gospel; and provided for the weakness and corruption of human nature, by the promise of divine assistance. In addition to those pure and exalted precepts, which more immediately respect the attainment of personal virtue, and consequently of personal happiness, Christianity prescribed the great laws of truth, justice, and charity, for the regulation of the conduct of mankind towards each other, and for the security and happiness both of individuals and of society. This latter object was still further provided for by those injunctions which declared
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the general obligation of submission and obedience to princes and governors, as to powers ordained of God, and the reciprocal obligation of rulers to consult the welfare of their subjects. The entire system, both of public and of private duty, was enforced by the authoritative revelation of a future state, in which the whole race of mankind would be eternally rewarded or punished, according to their works.

Such is, briefly, the nature of that religion which is proposed to be substituted for the delusions of Mohammedism, and the idolatry, ignorance, cruelty, and immorality of the Hindu superstition. To demonstrate its infinite superiority would surely be altogether an unnecessary labour. Without adverting to the beneficial influence of Christianity, wherever it has been hitherto introduced, a subject which has already occurred, and will be hereafter resumed, a few arguments only shall be adduced to prove the importance of promoting it in India.

1. The introduction of Christianity affords, in the first place, *the best and the only effectual means of improving the condition of the natives*. This has been already shewn to be, in many respects, degraded and deplorable; and it requires but little reasoning to demonstrate, that no regulations of a nature simply political will ever materially improve it. The Hindus are especially deficient in principle and in energy; and before these defects can be adequately supplied, the ignorance and the vices, which are now habitual to them, must be removed. Much may, no doubt, be effected by our mild government, and equal administration of justice, in India, towards promoting the welfare of our native subjects; but no radical amelioration of their condition can be produced, without an entire change in their moral sentiments and habits;

bits ; and the only effectual expedient for this purpose is the influence of the Christian religion. The work is too great to be accomplished by any mere human policy ; the difficulties of the attempt are insuperable by any means short of those with which Heaven has vouchsafed to entrust us, for our own benefit, and that of all with whom we are connected.

2. But it may be said, that, although the duty of promoting Christianity in our Oriental empire, and the advantages to be derived by the natives, be undoubted, the measure is fraught with *danger to our own interests as governors*. The Hindus, it may be said, in their present state are submissive to our authority ; but if enlightened and improved, they will be rendered independent of our control. “ But,” as it has been decisively asked, “ shall a “ Christian people, acknowledging a Providence in the rise and “ fall of empires, regulate the policy of future times, and neglect “ a present duty ; a solemn and imperious duty, exacted by their “ religion, by their public principles, and by the opinion of the “ Christian nations around them ?” The proper answer to such a question cannot, surely, be doubtful. It may, however, be safely argued, on the ground of *policy*, that the progressive improvement of the Hindus will never injure the interests of the British government^u. Besides adverting to the blessing of the divine Providence on such an attempt, and to the length of time which must elapse before the Hindus can ever become an improved people, even under all our exertions, the truth is, that *more danger* will result to

^u Loose reports have, indeed, been circulated both in India and in England, that the exertions of the Protestant missionaries had some influence in producing the late tragical mutiny at Vellore. But that melancholy event being fully accounted for from a very different cause, it is unnecessary to refute such unfounded rumours.

the British dominion in India from the continued operation of the ignorance and prejudices of the natives, than from any prudent attempt to convert them to the Christian faith.

Admitting, what must be deemed incontrovertible, the political influence of a mild, just, and humane administration, the system of our Indian government is still exposed to this radical defect; that it has no common bond of union between the people and their rulers; and that, until such a bond be established, we can neither expect nor rely on their attachment. The relative customs, habits, and religion of the Hindus are all opposed to ours, some of which are peculiarly offensive to them. The familiar intercourse, also, between Europeans and the natives, which has of late years so much increased, has a natural and unavoidable tendency to diminish the respect of the latter for our national character, without substituting any sentiment to counteract this diminution; the constant succession of the former weakens the effects of personal influence; and the barrier to a coalition of sentiment, while the state of things remains as at present, is invincible. That the natives of India acknowledge the lenity of the British administration, and the impartiality of its justice, may, indeed, be readily admitted. But it may be doubted, whether they are so deeply sensible of these benefits, as to feel any cordial attachment to the English government, or any very earnest wish for its permanence. The Mohammedans have not yet forgotten the annihilation of the influence and authority which they formerly possessed; and even the Zemindars, who are for the most part Hindus, consider the deprivation of the power which they enjoyed under the ancient government as scarcely compensated by their present advantages. Under such circumstances, especially considering that the proportion of subjects to the governing power is in the ratio of
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two millions to a thousand, is it possible, notwithstanding present appearances, to be without apprehensions for the permanency of the British dominion in India? Can an empire of opinion be pronounced durable, which is liable to perpetual decadence and decay by the operation of natural causes, and the more forcible effects of opposing prejudices? Power, though essential to our security, can never alone perpetuate our dominion in India. The medium through which it now appears magnified to the natives may, by the operation of art and intrigue, be gradually removed; and the consequences of such a change, especially when combined, as may very possibly be the case, when the restless machinations and the implacable hatred of our great European enemy are considered, with an external attack, cannot be contemplated without anxiety and alarm. If it be said that the danger is remote, it is not on that account the less to be dreaded and guarded against. Without reference, therefore, to higher principles of duty, *political considerations* are sufficient to establish the expediency of introducing, if possible, some common sentiment, which may unite allegiance with affection; which may in time diminish or destroy those prejudices which are the latent principles of aversion and revolt; and, if it should fail of producing this extensive effect, may at least provide another description of subjects, connected with their rulers by one common bond of union.

To appreciate the weight of this proposition, let us consider, for a moment, the political effect resulting from the discordant prejudices and superstitions of the two classes of subjects, Moham-medans and Hindus. In embodying the native troops, the force of the principle has ever been felt, and has been observed with the greatest attention. The religious prejudices of each furnish a perpetual check upon the other; and though they are rendered sub-

ordinate to discipline, sufficiently for military purposes, the domestic, social, and religious habits still remain distinct, and confirm the control of government over both. If a *third class* were to exist, it would augment this effect by a positive accession of strength, as well as by a diminution of the counteracting force.

The only principle of sufficient power to produce this effect is *the Christian religion*. No one, it is presumed, will deny, that our security would be increased, if a fourth, or fifth, or even a tenth proportion of our native subjects were Christians; and the only question for consideration is the political hazard of attempting the introduction of our faith in India. But this, it is conceived, is by no means to be dreaded.

Christianity, as we have already seen ^a, has been publicly preached in different parts of India, with no inconsiderable success, upwards of one hundred years; yet no evil whatever has hitherto resulted from these long-continued exertions. Nor is this to be apprehended, while those who propagate our holy religion continue to act with the mildness and prudence which, as it has been hitherto universally acknowledged, have characterized their conduct.

The divided state of the Hindus is a circumstance which tends to remove any fears as to the political consequences of attempting to introduce Christianity. They have no bond of union in themselves, and no principle capable of effecting it. A steady or concerted opposition to this work is not, therefore, to be apprehended.

The danger, as we have before observed, is evidently of another

^a See Brief Historic View prefixed.

kind. A Hindu, while he continues under the influence of his native superstitions, cannot be cordially attached to the British government : but when converted to the Christian faith, he possesses that common principle of union with it, which necessarily renders him a loyal and obedient subject.

The view which has now been given of the duty of the British government to endeavour to propagate the Christian religion throughout its Oriental empire, will, probably, be thought conclusive by many on the ground both of obligation and of policy. A previous question, however, may be urged upon the whole inquiry, as to *the practicability* of accomplishing this wise and benevolent plan.

It cannot be denied, that *various difficulties and impediments* are opposed to its execution. One of these obstacles arises from the supine, passive indifference of the Hindus, with respect to religious feeling. They do not deny the truth of Christianity ; but they think their own religion divine, and better adapted to their character and circumstances. They hear, therefore, with indifference, arguments in favour of Christianity. The Mohammedans, on the contrary, are alive to every feeling which respects their religion, however careless they may be in observing its dictates.

But *the attachment of the Hindus to their superstitious practices and customs* may be deemed the principal obstacle. All former writers represent this attachment as inveterate; and although their opinions are *now* to be received with considerable modification, we are not disposed to deny, that superstitions, the growth of ages, and the practices which are connected with them, must be deeply rivetted in the affections of an ignorant people, and indispose them

to the reception of instruction, calculated to subvert them. But as it has been excellently observed, the calmly obstinate attachment of the Hindus to their usages and institutions is not, like that of the Brahmins, founded on a clear conviction, that they are indissolubly connected with their own interest. It is a mere animal affection, not a sentiment; it is not the force of gravitation, but that of *inertia*; and the most eligible course to be pursued for the purpose of overcoming it, is to transfuse through the mass of the people the *vis vivax* of knowledge and virtue^b. Hence it follows, that it is going too far to assume the inefficacy of instruction in the case of the Hindus, until it shall have been fairly and prudently tried. The trial, so far as it has been made, proves their attachment to their customs to be by no means invincible: some of their most sanguinary practices are destitute even of the sanction of those books which they consider sacred, and have been abolished by the interference of the British administration. The attachment in question ought not, therefore, to be allowed to operate as a discouragement from the instruction of the Hindus, but to suggest caution and circumspection in the mode of attempting it. The success will certainly be slow, but there is no reason at present to conclude that the attempt will fail.

The mental degradation and gross ignorance of the Hindus have frequently been urged as an objection to any attempt to introduce Christian knowledge amongst them. In their present total want of moral information, it is said, they would be entirely unable to comprehend the doctrines and precepts of Christianity. But the degraded state of our native subjects as to mental cultivation, although it may be an obstacle to any immediate or extraordinary

^b Edinb. Rev. vol. ix. p. 418.

success in the propagation of Christianity, is certainly no valid objection to a cautious and moderate attempt to communicate it to them. It may be admitted, for the sake of argument, that, in their actual circumstances, the great body of the people may be unable fully to comprehend the doctrines and the morality of the Gospel. But how are they to be prepared for this? By previously introducing amongst them some additional portion of the knowledge and comforts of civilized life? But the very same difficulties present themselves to this attempt, as to the former; and after all, Christianity is the chief medium by which the minds of the Hindus must be enlightened and cultivated, and their civil condition improved. The civilization of the Hindus, and of other Asiatic nations, must be founded on *the removal* of their existing superstitions; and Christianity alone can effect this change. The only conclusion, therefore, which can be legitimately drawn from their ignorance and degradation, is, that our divine religion must be introduced, and taught in *a manner and by means* suited to such deplorable circumstances. It must, however, be added, that the fundamental doctrines and duties of the Gospel may be rendered perfectly intelligible to the most uncivilized and illiterate people. They were originally preached not only to the Jew and to the Greek, but to the Barbarian and the Seythian, to the wise and to the unwise; and they so approve themselves to the understandings and the hearts of men, that, when displayed in their native truth and simplicity, they have ever met with a cordial reception, even from the poorest and the most ignorant of mankind^c.

^c Such is the argument of Origen in his reply to Celsus. —κεκηρυγμενον το Ιησϋ Χριστῃ ευαγγελιον εν τοις ὑπο τον ουρανον Ἑλλησι και βαρβαροις, σοφοις και ανοητοις· πασαν γαρ φυσιν ανθρωπων ὁ μετα δυναμεως λαληθεις λογος κεκρατηκε· και ουκ εστι τι γενος ιδειν ανθρωπων ὁ εκπεφευγε παρδεξασθαι την Ιησου διδασκαλιαν. Orig. contra Celf. Ed. Bened. i. 400.

Another formidable obstacle to the progress of Christianity in Hindustan, is *the distribution of the natives into Castes*, and the excessive dread of losing their respective ranks, which universally prevails. This has ever been considered as an almost insuperable bar to their profession of Christianity; and it cannot be denied, that it presents an appearance of opposition to any favourable change, which seems, at first sight, to bid defiance to every attempt to overcome it. This compound of tyranny and priestcraft, for such it cannot but be esteemed, not only places, in the first instance, a most formidable barrier against the introduction of Christianity among the natives of Hindustan, but tends, also, to fetter and debase their minds beyond what can easily be conceived. Connected with the wretched bondage of the Caste, is the excessive veneration which the lower classes of the Hindus entertain for the Brahmins, their implicit obedience to the dictates, and their superstitious dread of the displeasure and malediction of that order.

To the apparently insurmountable obstacle of the Caste must, however, be opposed the evidence of facts, as to what has already taken place, notwithstanding its influence; and what would probably be the effect of a change in the circumstances of India respecting Christianity. It cannot be supposed, that the Hindus are to be considered as exceptions to the human race; and that their superstition is, more than all others over which Christianity has triumphed, to be deemed invincible. History affords many instances of the most barbarous and idolatrous nations^d resigning their ancient and inveterate prejudices to the truth of the Gospel; and it is certain, that this has been the case even in that very country which some would wish to consider wholly inaccessible to it.

^d See this fact well illustrated by Dr. Ryan, in his History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind.

India has from time immemorial felt the power of Christianity. Thousands of Brahmins, and others of the higher Castes, have abandoned their pride and superstition, and become obedient to the Christian faith; and that, let it be particularly observed, at a period when *the Hindus* held the dominion of India.

There are actually at this time on the coast of Malabar, chiefly in the territories of the Rajahs of Travancore, and Cochin, upwards of 200,000 natives, who profess the Christian religion. They are divided into three classes. 1. The St. Thomé or Syrian Christians, who appear to have been established in India nearly fifteen hundred years. They are situated amongst the hills, at the bottom of the High Ghauts, which divide the Carnatic from Malayala, and now occupy fifty-five Churches, acknowledging the Patriarch of Antioch. Their numbers are estimated at 70, or 80,000. This interesting body of Christians has been generally considered as holding the tenets of the Nestorian heresy; but it appears from the accounts of two very intelligent inquirers, who have lately visited them, that they disavow that heresy, and that their creed does not essentially differ from that of the Church of England^c. 2. The second class of Christians on the coast of Malabar is that of the Syrian Roman Catholics, who were constrained, after a long struggle, to join the Latin Church, and who still continue within her pale. These are said to be more numerous than the members of the original Syrian Church, and to be still gaining

^c For many other important particulars respecting the St. Thomé Christians, as well as the two other classes on the Malabar coast, see an account of the former by Dr. Buchanan, published in the Christian Observer for October 1807, and a report on the state of the Christian Churches in Cochin and Travancore by Dr. Ker, one of the East India Company's Chaplains, to the government of Madras.

ground. 3. The third description of native Christians is that of the Latin Roman Catholics, who are subject to the Primate of Goa. The numbers of this class are estimated at about 36,000.

Besides this extensive prevalence of Christianity in India, it has been successfully preached by Protestants, during the last hundred years, in the south and in the north of the peninsula. The Danish missionaries at Tranquebar, and others, under the patronage of the English Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, amidst the various obstacles which so small a body of men, invested with no authority, could not but have to encounter, have converted numbers to the Christian faith; and that, not exclusively from the lowest Castes, as it has been sometimes asserted, but partly from the higher orders of the Hindus^f. The missionaries, who have more recently been sent out by the Society of English Baptists, have been proportionably successful; and have proved, that the chain of the Caste is by no means indissoluble. Their proceedings state the conversion of several Brahmins; and, amongst others, that of one of the very highest order^g.

These indisputable facts are sufficient to prove, that the Brahminical superstition, however formidable, is not altogether insuperable; that, however difficult it may be to obtain access to the minds of the Hindus, there are numerous instances to prove that it is not impracticable; and it deserves particular consideration, that the success which has hitherto attended Protestant missionaries has been obtained amidst the most unfavourable circumstances: it is, therefore, the more to be regarded, and the little

^f See Letter of Mr. Swartz, in the Proceedings of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge for the year 1795.

^g i. e. a Koolin Brahmin.

comparative extent of it ought to excite less surprise. What has already been effected may be justly considered as an earnest of the future success which may be expected, whenever the proper means for the conversion of the Hindus shall be more directly and extensively employed.

These are some of the leading obstacles to the propagation of our pure faith in Hindustan. It is necessary, however, now to turn to a brighter view of the subject, and to notice some of the circumstances, which seem to prove *the practicability* of undertaking this great work, and to point out some of *the facilities* which present themselves for its accomplishment.

It may not be improper to premise, that although the introduction of Christianity amongst the Hindus may *now* be undertaken without danger, and with a fair prospect of success, provided the attempt be made with wisdom and discretion, it may be justly doubted, whether it could have been advantageously made at a much earlier period. For many years subsequent to the establishment of the British authority in Hindustan, the dispositions and institutions of the natives precluded every idea of such a design. The transfer of the supreme authority in Bengal from the Mohammedans to the English, and the consequent introduction of new rules and regulations, formed upon European principles and practices, into every department of the administration, have had an indirect, but powerful, influence on Indian prejudices; and the natural and necessary consequence has been an abatement in the attachment of the Hindus to their ancient customs. The most considerable political innovations were introduced by Lord Cornwallis in the year 1793; and we may consider that period not only as an æra of the most ma-

terial improvements in the civil administration of India, (which have since been extended on the same principles,) but of important moral alterations. These regulations of Lord Cornwallis seem, indeed, to have been necessary to prepare the minds of the Hindus for the reception of Christianity ^a.

Notwithstanding the representation which has been previously given of the rooted attachment of the Hindus to their superstitions, prejudices, and customs, we are enabled to assert, from actual evidence, what we might have concluded from probability, that the Brahminical superstition has felt the influence of British principles, and that it is daily weakening in every European settlement. A very striking instance of this diminished attachment of the Hindus to the most solemn prescriptions of their religion may be observed in the free and unlimited disclosure of the doctrines of their sacred books, which has of late years been made by the Brahmins. Many recent accounts, also, concur in asserting, that the natives, in general, are more open to instruction than has been commonly allowed; and that any temperate measures for promoting it may be safely adopted.

The light which has been thrown on Oriental antiquities, learning, and religion, by the labours of Sir William Jones, and his colleagues of the Asiatic Society, as it tends to develop the genius and character of the Hindus, and to point out the readiest modes of convincing and persuading them, is another circumstance facilitating the introduction of the Christian religion; while the increased knowledge of the languages, which is the consequence of the Institution at Fort William, is producing a similar effect, by

^a See the Christian Observer for May 1806.

promoting the intercourse between the British and the natives, diminishing their prejudices, and giving additional force to British principles, manners, and conduct.

The situation of the natives of Hindustan (and the observation applies also to China, and some other Asiatic nations) respecting religion, the knowledge of which has but lately been generally diffused, affords great encouragement to the attempt to propagate Christianity amongst them.

There are multitudes of the people who are entirely destitute of any religious belief; who are neither Mohammedans, nor devoted to the native superstition. Outcasts from every faith, they would be disposed to listen to the Christian teacher, who should offer to supply their present want; and though despicable in the eyes of their countrymen, their conversion would not, in reality, be less honourable or important, than that of the proud Brahmin, or the bigoted follower of Mohammed.

It appears from various accounts, that the Hindus are a divided people; that they are less tenacious of opinion than of custom; and that in no other country has there been such a variety of opinions on religious subjects, for many ages past, as in Hindustan.

The Seiksⁱ, who possess the extensive country of the Panjab, have, in a great measure, apostatized from the Hindu system, and have made great approaches to deism. They may be considered as “the reformed of India;” and would, probably, prove by no

ⁱ Nanuck, the founder of this sect, flourished about three centuries since. For an account of him, see Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 288.

means so inaccessible to arguments in favour of Christianity, as the adherents of the ancient faith.

In the province of Bengal alone^k, (which has been accounted the strong hold of the Brahminical superstition,) there are five classes of natives who are adverse to the Brahminical system, and who may be termed Dissenters from the Hindu practices and religion. The founder of one of these taught, that there is no distinction of Caste; a tenet, which alone undermines the whole system of Hinduism. Others of these sects have testified a strong inclination to the Protestant missionaries, to renounce their errors, and receive Christian instruction; and some have even accepted the Bible, and other religious books in the Bengali language, which they now teach in a school established for the instruction of children.

Such appear, from the representations of those who are best qualified to judge concerning this important point, to be some of the most *favourable circumstances* in the actual state and disposition of the natives of India, which may serve to recommend and facilitate a prudent and well digested plan for the introduction of Christianity amongst them.

It will now be proper to proceed to the consideration of the main question, respecting the means of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues, and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia.

^k See Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, note F.

CHAP. II.

*The Means of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental languages,
and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia.*

SECT. I.

TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

ARGUMENT.

*Preliminary observations on the propriety and importance of translating the Scriptures—
Policy of false religions as to their sacred books—Contrast afforded by the Jewish and
the Christian Church—Evils arising from the Roman Catholic prohibition of the
Scriptures in the vernacular languages—Effects of the translation of them at the Re-
formation—Opinion of Sir William Jones as to the translation of Scripture into the
languages of Asia—general description of them—actual state of Oriental translation
—means of extending and completing it—College of Fort William in Bengal, the
grand source of it—manner in which it should be conducted—expence attending it—
Encouragement and aid to be afforded to this work, by two Societies in England,
and the two Universities.*

IF it be the duty of Great Britain, as a Christian nation, to introduce our holy faith into Asia, there can be no question, that, as a Protestant nation, it is its duty to translate the divine records of that faith into the languages of those countries, over which it either exercises its authority, or possesses any influence or control. It may not, however, be unnecessary to make some preliminary obser-

observations on the propriety and the importance of this step, as one grand medium of diffusing Christian knowledge.

It has been the general policy of the authors of false religions, to conceal the institutes and mysteries of their pretended revelations from the knowledge of the vulgar; that is, of the great body of the people in every country. This has been effected either by involving them in hieroglyphic symbols, or mysterious rites and observances; by throwing over them the veil of a sacred language, confined to a particular body of men; or, by prohibiting the perusal of the sacred books by the profane eyes of the multitude. Hence, the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians; the mysteries and esoteric doctrines of the Greeks and Romans; the prohibitory laws of the Hindus; and the partial discouragements of the Mohammedans^a. The grounds of this disgraceful policy are sufficiently obvious. Ignorance, whilst it is justly said to be the parent of a blind and bigoted devotion to error and superstition, invests the supposed sacred object with a mysterious grandeur, which leads its unhappy votary captive, and perpetuates its wanderings from truth and virtue.

The contrast which has been exhibited in the conduct of the stewards of our holy faith in all ages of the Church, except during the triumphant prevalence of the great Papal apostasy, is one of those circumstances which illustrate its divine origin and excellence.

No command was more solemnly given, or more repeatedly enforced, by the great Legislator of the Jews, to the collective body

^a See note N.

of the people, than that of a diligent and frequent perusal of their law ; not only as it respected their civil concerns, but as it contained the rules of their moral and religious conduct ^b. Obedience to this command was recommended by the exhortations and examples of their wisest monarchs, and enforced by promises of the most important nature ; while the neglect of it was followed by the most fatal corruptions and disorders, and formed one of those transgressions which called for the reproofs and admonitions of the Prophets.

No sooner had the Jews who were settled in Alexandria so far become strangers to their native language, as to be unable to read with facility and advantage their sacred Scriptures, than the Providence of God so ordained it, that a heathen prince should be the instrument of furnishing them with the celebrated translation of the Septuagint ^c, to supply the want of the original volumes, and to perpetuate amongst them the laws and institutions, and prophecies of their forefathers. The advantages of this great work were not confined to the people for whom it was originally undertaken. Its remote consequences, as we have already observed, were felt throughout the East, and through a great part of the Roman empire, during nearly three hundred years previous to the coming of the long-expected Redeemer of mankind. When Christianity was actually introduced into the world, the Greek language was more universally understood than any other ; so that throughout the greater part of their travels, the Apostles met with many to whom it was either native or familiar. The translation of the Septuagint was then quoted and used as containing a faithful version of the original Scriptures ; and the writings of the Apostles were committed to the same widely diffused language.

^b Deut. vi. 6, 7.

^c See note O.

There were, however, some nations in which the Greek language was comparatively but little known ; and, for their benefit, translations of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, or of the latter only, were early undertaken. Thus gradually arose the Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Arabic, and Persian versions. The first of these, like the Greek, became the universal medium of Christian instruction throughout the Roman empire. In process of time, as Christianity prevailed among the barbarous nations by whom that empire was overturned, and in the north of Europe, translations ^d were successively made, and became the great instrument of converting and instructing the people amongst whom they were dispersed. The necessity and utility of this measure must be obvious to those who admit, that the chief design of revelation is to instruct and reform the great bulk of mankind. This end can never be attained, while the sources of moral and religious knowledge are concealed by those original languages, which must in general be inaccessible to them.

It may be further proved, by the evils which have invariably flowed from the ignorance in which the great body of the people have been sometimes unwarrantably detained. We need only refer to the period during which the Church of Rome exercised her tyrannical and uncontrolled dominion over the Christian world, which presented one universal scene of intellectual and moral darkness, superstition, and vice, and was fast relapsing into the errors and idolatry of heathenism.

The translation of the Scriptures by Wickliffe afforded the first glimmerings of that brighter day, which afterwards succeeded the

^d See the Brief Historic View prefixed, in various places.

night of Papal ignorance. And the subsequent versions of Luther in Germany, and of Tindal, Archbishop Cranmer, and others, in England, were amongst the most effectual means which were employed by those wise and zealous Reformers, in promoting the Protestant religion in Europe.

It is a fact, which we have already had occasion repeatedly to observe *, that wherever the Scriptures have been translated into the vernacular language of any country, and generally dispersed, they have uniformly enlightened and instructed the minds of men. That such a measure should be adopted wherever it is intended to introduce the Christian religion, cannot, therefore, be doubted. The only point which may admit of a question with respect to the instruction of a heathen nation, is the expediency of introducing *the English language* in the first instance, and then of dispersing the English Bible amongst the natives. This may, perhaps, demand consideration with reference to some parts of Africa and America, and the islands of the South Sea ; but as far as Asia is concerned, the question can scarcely be considered as requiring any discussion. There the native languages have, in general, been formed and cultivated for many ages, and some of them are superstitiously revered ; most of them are, also, sufficiently copious to admit of a full and perspicuous translation of the Scriptures. The vast population of Asia, and the length of time which must elapse before the English language can become generally diffused, are, moreover, decisive as to the superior expediency of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues.

In support of this measure, as one of the most important means

* See Brief Historic View prefixed.

of diffusing Christian knowledge in Asia, the opinion of Sir William Jones^f, who will be universally allowed to have been both a competent and an impartial judge, although limited as to its extent, may be fairly adduced. “ We may assure ourselves,” says that learned writer, “ that neither Muselmans nor Hindus will
 “ ever be converted by any mission from the Church of Rome, or
 “ from any other Church^g; and the only human mode, perhaps,
 “ of causing so great a revolution, will be to translate into Sanscrit
 “ and Persian such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah,
 “ as are indisputably evangelical, together with one of the Gospels,
 “ and a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidence of the
 “ very distant ages in which the predictions themselves, and the
 “ history of the divine Person predicted, were severally made public ; and then quietly to disperse the work amongst the well-
 “ educated natives ; with whom, if, in due time, it failed of producing very salutary fruit by its natural influence, we could only
 “ lament, more than ever, the strength of prejudice, and the weakness of unassisted reason^h.”

The expediency of translating the Scriptures, either more or less fully, into the Oriental languages rests, therefore, on the solid basis of the invariable practice of the Christian Church in former ages ; the uniform experience of its utility in the great work of converting the heathen ; and the opinion of one, who, from local as well as general knowledge, was most competent to form a right judgment on this subject.

^f Many other testimonies might have been added, but that of Sir William Jones was deemed both unexceptionable and decisive.

^g Some observations will hereafter be made on this part of the quotation.

^h Dissertation on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India.

In proceeding to the consideration of *the means* of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues, it may be proper previously to give some brief account of their nature and comparative importance.

The languages of Asia are numerous and diversified. They differ in the extent of their influence, the nature of their construction, the degree of their copiousness and refinement, and the facility of their acquisition by foreigners. Some of them are radically distinct from the rest; whilst others have a manifest relation and affinity to each other.

The instruction of India being the object first to be attended to, its languages should be first noticed. They may all, according to the distribution of a profound Oriental scholarⁱ, be comprehended in three classes. The first of these contains the Sanscrit^k, a most polished tongue, which is represented by Sir William Jones^l “as more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either.” It is cultivated by learned Hindus throughout India as the language of science and of literature, and as the repository of their law, civil and religious. It is said evidently to draw its origin from a primæval tongue, which was gradually refined in various climates, and became Sanscrit in India, Pahlavi in Persia, and Greek on the shores of the Mediterranean. The Sanscrit has nearly shared the fate of all ancient tongues, and is now become almost a dead language; but there

ⁱ H. T. Colebrooke, Esq. Professor of Hindu Law, and of Sanscrit, in the College of Fort William. Dissertation on the Sanscrit and Pracrit Languages. Asiatic Researches, Vol. VII.

^k This word, when applied to a language, signifies “polished.”

^l Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. 25.

seems to be no good reason for doubting that it was once universally spoken in India. It is fixed in the classic writings of many elegant poets, most of whom are supposed to have flourished in the century preceding the Christian æra^m; and is esteemed by the Brahmins as nearly of divine origin. The importance of a translation of the Scriptures into this extraordinary language is, therefore, obvious. Such a work would be powerfully recommended by the veneration in which the Sanscrit is universally held, and would probably have greater influence with the more learned Hindus than any other. It is accordingly particularly recommended by Sir William Jones in the passage which has been already quoted relative to the present subject; and, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty of the undertaking, it has already been attempted by some of the learned and enterprising scholars who adorn our Oriental empire.

The second class of Indian languages comprehends the written dialects which are now used in the intercourse of civil life, and which are cultivated by men of letters. There is reason to believe that ten polished dialects formerly prevailed in as many different nations, who occupied the fertile provinces of Hindustan and the Decanⁿ. Of these, that to which the denomination of Prácrit has been restricted, which was spoken by the Sáreswata on the banks of the river Sáraswatí, has long since ceased to be vernacular; and may therefore, notwithstanding its excellence, be considered as unconnected with the present inquiry. The same observation applies to that of the Cányacubjas, who once possessed a great empire, the metropolis of which was the ancient city of

^m For a more detailed account of the Sanscrit, see Mr. Colebrooke's Dissertation.

ⁿ Colebrooke's Differt. ut supra.

Cányacubja, or Canój. The language of this nation is said to be that which is known by the appellation of Hindi, or Hindevi. It possesses a peculiar affinity to the Sanscrit, from which it probably sprung, and is the ground-work of the modern Hindustani, by which, as a popular language, it is now superseded. The language of Mit'hila and the dialect of Gurjara, including the modern Guzerat, and the greatest part of Candesh and Malwa, so nearly resemble severally the Bengali and the Hindi, both as to their nature, and the characters in which they are written, that it is unnecessary to notice them further in this place. The six remaining languages are of much greater importance.

Previously, however, to these, the Hindustani, as the most extensively known, and therefore the most generally useful, claims our attention. This elegant language, derived from the ancient Hindi, and enriched or enlarged by the accession of innumerable terms from the Persian and the Arabic, is the common vehicle of colloquial intercourse among all the well-educated natives of India. The Mohammedans almost universally understand and speak it. Every Hindu of any distinction, connected either with the Mohammedan or British government, is conversant with it; and it is the general medium of communication between foreigners in India. In the armies its use is nearly universal. Throughout the vast extent of country from Cape Comorin to Kabul, a tract 2000 miles in length, and 1400 in breadth, within the Ganges, there are but few of the large villages or towns which have been conquered or frequented by the Muselmans, in which some persons will not be found who are sufficiently acquainted with the Hindustani language; and in many places beyond the Ganges it is current and familiar.

The

The Bengáli is the language spoken in the provinces of which the ancient city of Gaur was once the capital. It still prevails throughout Bengal, except perhaps in some of the frontier districts, and is copious, and regularly formed. It is written, not in the Déva-nagari, but in a peculiar character adopted by the inhabitants of Bengal. The importance of this language is evident, from its prevalence throughout the richest and most valuable portion of the British possessions in India.

The language of the province of Orissa, and the character in which it is written, are both called Uríja. It is said to contain many Sanscrit and Arabic terms, borrowed through the medium of Hindustani, together with others of doubtful origin.

That which prevails from Madras southward, over the greater part of the extremity of the peninsula, and in the north of Ceylon, is the Tamel, to which Europeans have improperly given the name of Malabar. The proper Malabar, a dialect distinct from the Tamel, is vernacular in Malayala, comprehending the mountains, and the whole region within them, from Cape Comorin to Cape Illi.

The Maharashtra, or Mahr'atta, is the language of a nation which has greatly enlarged its ancient limits, although its progress has of late been checked by the ascendancy of the British power. The language of the Mahr'attas is now widely spread, but is not yet become the vernacular dialect of any provinces which are situated far beyond the ancient boundaries of their country.

Carnátá, or Cárnara, is the ancient language of Carnátáca, a province which has given name to districts on both sides of the
penin-

peninsula. This dialect still prevails in the intermediate mountainous tract, but seems to be superseded by other provincial tongues on the eastern coast.

Télinga, or Tilanga, is at once the name of a nation, of its language, and of the character in which that language is written. It is widely spread in the adjacent provinces on either bank of the Chirfná and Gódáverí, and those situated on the north-eastern coast of the peninsula.

Such are, briefly, the ten principal languages of India, to which a copious list might be added of dialects, forming the third of the classes into which they were said to be distributed. But of these it is only necessary to mention that of the Panjáb, a province watered by the five celebrated rivers which fall into the Sind'hu, and now in the possession of the Seiks.

Two other languages, of the first importance in Asia, remain, however, to be noticed; the Persian and the Arabic. The Persian language, besides the extent of it in the empire which bears its name, is generally known throughout India °. The court of Delhi, after the establishment of the Mogul authority, having adopted the use of the Persian language in all the transactions of government, the Mohammedans, in general, in or above the middle class, are instructed in it; and the Hindus, who aspire either to employment in our service, or to the recommendation of a liberal education, are under the necessity of learning it. The knowledge of this po-

° The pure Persian is only spoken in the southern part of that empire. It is, however, the written language over a great part of Eastern Tartary, and is said to be spoken in Bucharia.

lished and elegant language thus extends to millions, and through its medium the Scriptures may be widely diffused in Hindustan.

The importance of the Arabic is still greater. Independently of its diffusion throughout Africa, a continent, which, though not immediately connected with our present inquiry, may yet be justly taken into collateral consideration, this celebrated language, the copiousness and elegance of which have been so highly extolled, and so eloquently described by Oriental scholars, furnishes a vehicle by which the records of our holy faith may be advantageously conveyed, not only to the Mohammedans of India, but to those of Arabia, Tartary, and Asiatic Turkey, and in general throughout the Turkish dominions; where, though not commonly spoken, it is taught in the schools, and universally studied by men of letters, as the learned languages are in Europe.

In quitting the immediate consideration of Hindustan, the three Asiatic languages, which are the most important, are the Chinese, the Malay, and the Tartarian. The two first of these, together with the Hindustani and the Persian, are the four primary and popular languages of Asia.

Of the importance of the Chinese it is only necessary to observe, that it is the language of three hundred millions of men; that the Chinese character is understood from the Gulf of Siam to the Tartarian Sea, and over a very considerable part of the great eastern Archipelago; and that the inhabitants of Cochin China, as well as the Japanese, use no other writing^p. The expediency of trans-

^p See Barrow's China, p. 615. See also the Rev. Mr. Moseley's interesting Memoir on the introduction of the Scriptures into China; First Report of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East.

lating the Scriptures into the Chinese language at this time, may be argued from the facilities which now present themselves^a; the spirit of innovation which is spreading throughout the eastern part of that empire; the inquisitive character of the Chinese; and the freedom of their press, by which copies of the Bible might speedily be multiplied and dispersed.

The Tartarian language is probably spoken over a wider extent of country than any other in the world, except the Chinese. It would not, perhaps, be difficult to prove, that it is prevalent even among greater numbers than the Chinese. The Castan Tartars have been incorporated into the Chinese since the year 1644; and about the year 1771, there were remarkable emigrations of Tartars from Russia to China. The Tartarian language is spoken throughout the whole extent of Tartary^r, and the greatest part of Persia^s.

From this imperfect sketch of the principal languages of Asia, it will be necessary to proceed to the actual state of translations of the Scriptures into any of them at this time.

It is well known, that the Bible has long since been extant in the Arabic tongue, and is contained in the English Polyglot. This version was probably composed by some of the most learned men of Syria and Egypt, at a time when Arabic literature was at its

^a These are hereafter mentioned.

^r The Calmuks have a peculiar language of their own; and in the neighbourhood of Astracan, those who pretend to learning write the Turkish language, which is little more than the Tartar, refined and enriched by Arabic and Persian words.

^s See note on page 135.

zenith. It has been termed by one celebrated Orientalist ^t, “*ver-
“ fio elegans quidem et antiqua ;*” and by another ^u, “*nobilissi-
“ mum totius Testamenti exemplar :*” and some progress was
made by the late Professor Carlyle of Cambridge towards repub-
lishing it, for the purpose of being circulated in Asia. It has been
asserted, indeed, by a writer, whose authority is too respectable
to be lightly questioned ^x, that the republication of the present
Arabic Bible could never be useful as a popular work in Arabia,
being composed in the classic, and not in the vernacular, dialect
of that country. For a similar reason, he adds, the old Persian
translation is of no use in Persia ^y. As to the Arabic, however,
there are extant other translations of the whole or of parts of the
Scriptures, from which, and from that of the Polyglot, a new one
of sufficient accuracy and utility might be published ^z.

In the year 1719, Bartholomew Ziegenbalgus, the first Pro-
testant missionary to India, completed a translation of the whole
Scriptures into the Tamel tongue, from which several other ver-
sions have proceeded. The Bible has also been translated into
the Bengáli language by Mr. Carey ^a, the Sanscrit teacher in the
College of Fort William; and two editions of it have already been
distributed amongst the natives of Bengal.

From the representations of Dr. Buchanan, it appears, that the
four Gospels have been translated into the Persian, Hindustani,
Mahr’atta, Orissá, and Malay languages, either by members of the

^t Erpenius.

^u Gabriel Sionita.

^x See Dr. Buchanan’s Memoir, note M.

^y See note P.

^z The Author has omitted in this enumeration the Syriac and Armenian ver-
sions, as too well known to require particular notice.

^a See note Q.

College of Fort William, or by the learned natives attached to that institution. One other version, also, of the highest importance has been attempted, that of the whole Scriptures into the Chinese language, and parts of the Book of Genesis and the Gospel of St. Matthew had, early in the year 1805, been actually printed off. A more recent communication from the Rev. David Brown, Provost of the same College, announces very considerable further progress in this important work. Ten different versions are mentioned as being in various stages of forwardness, amongst which is one in Sanscrit. The two first Gospels in this ancient language were expected to be ready by the end of the last year ; and it is added, that the Sanscrit and Chinese (apparently the most difficult of access) had been discovered to be the most practicable of all the languages yet undertaken. There is every reason, therefore, to presume, that these auspicious beginnings will be progressively continued ; and that the translations will, in process of time, and under the encouragement of the British government, be extended to all the Asiatic languages.

At Karafs, on the frontiers of Russia and Circassia ^b, Mr. Brunton, the Protestant missionary, who has been already mentioned, has made considerable progress in translating the Scriptures into the Turkish language. To this object he has devoted much of his time and attention ; and he thinks that he has succeeded in making such a translation as will be understood, not only by the Turks, but also by the Tartars.

Such, according to the present state of our information, is the actual progress which has been made in translating the Scriptures

^b See Brief Historic View prefixed.

into the Oriental tongues. With the exception of the ancient Arabic and Persian versions, of the Tامل translation, of the Bengáli Bible, and of the undertaking of Mr. Brunton, the several important versions which have been before enumerated were entered upon under the liberal and enlightened auspices of the Marquis Wellesley, and under the direction of the College of Fort William.

That thus in the very centre of the Pagan world, and at the chief seat of Brahminical superstition and idolatry, works subversive of their inveterate errors should not only be carried on, but be undesignedly forwarded by some of the unconverted natives themselves, is surely a very striking proof of that admirable direction of the divine Providence, which has been already noticed, by which the enemies of Christianity are made the unconscious instruments of its propagation and success. And that they should be undertaken amidst the urgent and diversified affairs of the British government in India, reflects the highest honour on the noble Patron, and the learned and laborious persons who have been engaged in the execution of them.

In considering *the best means* of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues, it appears to be chiefly necessary to refer to the facts which have been just stated. After the progress which has been already made in the great work of Eastern translation, but little doubt can be entertained as to the most eligible means of continuing and completing it.

Few persons will, perhaps, be found, who would venture to recommend the undertaking such a work in England, in preference to India. Whatever be the country into the language of which it
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is proposed to translate the Scriptures, it requires no laboured arguments to prove, that, without the aid of learned natives who may write that language, or hear it read by the translator, no work of this kind can be prosecuted with any confidence of its utility. As to this point, the reasoning of Dr. Buchanan, with regard to the projected translation of the Scriptures into the Chinese language, will probably be considered as unanswerable. What that learned writer has observed respecting the Chinese version may, in some degree, be applied to all other translations into the languages of Asia.

The College of Fort William may with justice be considered as the grand source of Oriental translation. It is scarcely possible to contemplate that institution, without the most lively conviction of the extent to which, together with other important designs, it is evidently calculated to promote the dissemination of scriptural knowledge in Asia. The emulation which it has excited in the younger servants of the East India Company in the acquisition of the Oriental tongues^c, and, above all, the numerous assemblage of

^c May the Author here be permitted to pay a tribute of affectionate regret to the memory of one of these Oriental students, William Pearson Elliott, Esq. of the Bengal Civil Establishment; whose extraordinary proficiency in the Persian, Hindustani, and Arabic languages, merited, and procured for him, the highest academical honours in the College of Fort William, and led, by the express direction of the Marquis Wellesley, to his appointment as Secretary to a diplomatic mission to the Arabian States, in the year 1802. In the absence of Sir Home Popham, to whom the direction of the embassy had been confided, Mr. Elliott undertook the sole conduct of the correspondence in Arabic, from Mocha, with the Imam of Sunnaa, and soon afterwards proceeded to his residence. But within a few days after his arrival, he was seized with a fever, which very shortly put a period to his existence, at the early age of twenty-two years. Such, however, had been the ability and propriety with which he had conducted himself as Secretary to the embassy, that the Imam not only shewed him the utmost kindness and attention during his illness, but, as a remarkable proof of his regard, directed that he should

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learned Asiatics^d which it has attracted from different parts of that extensive continent, combine in forming a decisive proof of the importance of that institution to the interests of Christianity^e. “In this view,” observes Dr. Buchanan^f, “the Oriental College “has been compared by one of our Hindu poets to a ‘flood of light shooting through a dark cloud on a benighted land.’ Directed by it, the learned natives, from every quarter of India, and “from the parts beyond, from Persia and Arabia, come to the “source of knowledge: they mark our principles, ponder the volume of inspiration, ‘and hear, every man in his own tongue, ‘the wonderful works of God.’”

Whether the object be to procure, with the least difficulty and expence, classical or popular translations of the Scriptures into the languages of Asia, the institution in question offers facilities and advantages which were never before presented, and which it is

be interred near his palace; an honour which had never before been conferred on any Christian. The premature death of Mr. Elliott was lamented by Sir Home Popham, in a letter to Lord Wellesley, as a loss to the public of “a servant of “the most promising talents, of the highest principles, and of the most unbounded “zeal and application.”

In connexion with the subject of the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of Asia, the Author trusts that he shall be excused, in expressing the additional regret which he cannot but feel at the early removal of one, whose actual attainments, and undoubted promise of future progress in Oriental learning, combined with his known disposition and character, would probably have rendered him eminently useful in promoting the accomplishment of that important object.

^d There are attached to the College at this time upwards of one hundred learned men, who have arrived from different parts of India, Persia, and Arabia.

^e It does not appear that the reductions and limitations, which have been made since the original establishment of the College, materially affect the object of the present discussion.

^f Memoir, page 81.

in vain to expect will ever be attainable in Europe. Besides the reasons which have been already adduced; the central situation of Calcutta; the certainty of making such translations as would be really intelligible and useful to the Asiatic nations, by the knowledge both of the classical and vernacular dialects; and the smaller amount of expence, which may, in almost every case, be stated at one fourth of what would be required in Europe for the accomplishment of the same objects, are arguments sufficient to prove, that to the College of Fort William we are directed to look, by the plainest intimations, for the completion of a series of the most important works in sacred literature, to which the divine Providence has ever vouchsafed to direct the zeal and talents of any Christian nation.

After the experience which the learned members of that institution have long ere this attained in the work of translation, it may, perhaps, be deemed unnecessary to enter into any detailed observations as to *the manner* in which the different proposed versions should be conducted. A few remarks, however, may be allowed, which are offered with the utmost diffidence and respect.

On this part of the subject, the first question which occurs relates to the text from which these translations should be made. It is undoubtedly to be desired, that the original Scriptures should for this purpose, wherever it is possible, be resorted to; but as in many cases this is an advantage which cannot be obtained, the next best resource is clearly the authorized English version. The general merits of this translation have been universally acknowledged. It is, with few material exceptions, a faithful transcript of the sacred originals. Imperfections of various kinds have, no doubt, been discovered in it; but with the assistance of the nume-

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rous translations and illustrations of the Scriptures, which have been produced in modern times, they might with little difficulty be remedied. It is desirable, therefore, that the Professors, or other learned Europeans by whom the Oriental versions may be either executed or superintended, and who would probably be conversant with the Hebrew and Greek languages, should direct their attention to this important point, and avail themselves of the labours of those illustrious Biblical scholars, which our two Universities, more especially that of Oxford, have produced, as well as of those of the learned foreigners, who have so largely contributed to the general stock of sacred criticism.

This consideration leads directly to that of the persons by whom the intended translations should be executed. If it were possible to obtain them by the efforts of Europeans alone, it were in some respects to be preferred. But this can scarcely be expected. It may be observed in general, that, in every case which admits of a choice of translators, *Christians* should be selected; and that in every instance the versions by unenlightened natives should be examined by Christian professors, previously to their being printed and dispersed in Asia.

The books, of which the sacred volume of our Scriptures is composed, are so various, both as to the subjects which they contain, and as to the nature of the compositions, that it can seldom happen that any one person can be found capable of translating every part with equal fidelity and propriety. The length of time, also, which must be occupied by a single translator in the completion of so large a work, is a further objection to its being thus undertaken. It seems, therefore, to be desirable, wherever it is practicable, to follow the illustrious examples of the Septuagint, and of the
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the last revival of the English Bible, in the reign of James I. Of the former, indeed, we know but little that is certainly authentic; except that the translation was confided to a large body of learned Jews, who are supposed to have divided the work amongst themselves, and to have contributed their united abilities to the completion of that celebrated performance. In the latter case, the translation and revision of the different parts of the English Bible were entrusted to no less than fifty-four of the most learned Ecclesiastics of the kingdom, and chiefly resident members of the two Universities, arranged in six divisions, according to their peculiar talents and acquirements. Each portion of the work was afterwards submitted to the other divisions, for their correction and approbation; and collated both with the original Scriptures, and with the most approved ancient and modern versions ^f.

Thus, in the different proposed translations of the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues, it appears to be desirable that they should be severally undertaken by more than one of the learned professors or teachers, whether natives or Europeans, who are attached to the College of Fort William; that each should be reviewed, during its progress, by all the members of that institution who are competent to such a revival, and should be carefully collated with other approved versions. It is equally necessary that every page, before it is published, should be read to a native, who should be allowed to remark on any expressions which are not idiomatical, or not sufficiently perspicuous and intelligible. Translations into foreign languages often fail in very different ways; sometimes they are too learned, sometimes vulgar, and at others too literal ^g. The

^f See Johnson's Account of the several English Translations of the Bible.

^g This remark applies to the Gospels in Persian published by Wheelock.

caution, however, which has already been exercised relative to this point, in the instance of the second edition of the Bengáli New Testament, affords sufficient proof that our learned countrymen in India are fully aware of its importance ^h.

In distributing the Scriptures, thus translated, in Asia, it may be important in many cases to consult both the indolence and the weakness of the natives, by submitting to them at first certain parts only of the Bible, which should obviously be the most material, and the least incumbered with difficulties. The Book of Genesis, some parts of the Prophecies of Isaiah, the Gospel of St. Luke ⁱ, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Romans, seem to be the best calculated for immediate dispersion. Other portions might follow in due time; and every part should be accompanied by an introduction, exhibiting a brief view of the evidences of the divine origin and truth of the several books of which it may be composed, and of their subjects and connexion, together with other needful elucidations of the sacred writers.

The expence which must necessarily attend this great work of Oriental translation, and of printing, in sufficient numbers, copies of the various sacred versions, though much less than would attend a similar undertaking in England, would still be so considerable as to demand particular attention. But in a concern, the ultimate advantages of which would be scarcely less enjoyed by the British government, than by the objects of its beneficence, it may be presumed, that an appeal to its liberality would not prove unsuccessful. The enlightened policy, which suggested the establishment of

^h See note R.

ⁱ The learned Melancthon preferred that of St. John, as an introduction to Christianity.

the College of Fort William, could not be directed to a more congenial measure, than the encouragement of Scriptural translation into those languages, of which it has already so remarkably facilitated the acquisition. The assistance, which it is proposed to solicit from the government of India, could not be an object of much consideration; and the limits of it might be readily ascertained, by a reference to those persons to whom the execution of the work itself may be entrusted.

In addition to the encouragement and assistance to be thus afforded by the British government, the College of Fort William, as the centre of Oriental translation, has the strongest claims on the patronage and support of every European institution, which is either directly or remotely connected with that important object. Two societies in our own country are particularly interested in its welfare; the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which has during a long course of years so laudably distinguished itself by its missions in Hindustan; and the lately instituted British and Foreign Bible Society. To these institutions the College of Fort William will naturally look for countenance and assistance; and it is to be hoped that it will not look in vain^k.

The two celebrated Universities of England may, also, with propriety be expected to regard with peculiar complacency the College of Fort William, and feel themselves bound to wish for its prosperity, and to promote its usefulness to the utmost of their power. The distinguished honour which they have long enjoyed of diffusing, in a preeminent degree, literature, science, and reli-

^k See note S.

gion, and more particularly the extent to which they are engaged in the printing and distribution of the Scriptures throughout the British empire, may be considered as a pledge of the lively interest which they will take in the dissemination of the same blessings in the Eastern world. And although the actual translation of the Bible into the Oriental tongues has, for the reasons before stated, been recommended to be undertaken by the collegiate institution in Hindustan, it cannot be doubted, that the learned members of that society would not only deem themselves honoured by the patronage of the two Universities, but might receive much important assistance from the celebrated Orientalists who severally adorn them¹. Under such auspices, the difficult and laborious duty of Eastern translation might be justly contemplated with augmented hopes of completion and success.

It is impossible to close this part of the subject, without once more recurring to the importance of that institution, to which the work of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues has been recommended, and upon which, if ever accomplished, it will chiefly devolve.

The College of Fort William, whether considered with reference to India or to Britain, cannot be too highly appreciated. It has indeed been objected to on the ground of the expence in which it has involved the East India Company. But it may be safely affirmed, that had this even exceeded what has been actually incurred, the benefits which the College has already been the means of conferring on the British government, and which it must

¹ It can scarcely be necessary to mention the names of Dr. White, the learned Regius Professor of Hebrew, and Laudian Professor of Arabic, and of Dr. Ford, the Lord Almoner's Prælector in the latter tongue, in the University of Oxford.

continue to ensure to it, so long, at least, as the conduct of it shall be strictly conformable to the rules of its institution, will be an ample compensation. The increased ability, energy, and security, which it has afforded to the British administration of Oriental affairs, are sufficient to characterize it as a measure of profound policy, and of the most enlarged benevolence. To the natives of India, and eventually of the whole continent of Asia, the advantages of this learned institution are incalculable. Their progressive improvement and happiness are intimately connected with it, and in no point of view more manifestly, than as it is calculated to be the fountain of Scriptural translation; the source, whence those streams of divine knowledge, wisdom, and comfort may flow, which can alone enlighten and civilize the Eastern world.

SECT. II.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL ESTABLISHMENT.

 ARGUMENT.

*Necessity of this as preliminary to other measures—Evils arising from the want of it—
 Probable effect of such an Establishment on the Hindus. Extent and expence of it—
 Its objects—Character of its members.*

THE translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental languages, as one of the primary and most important means of promoting Christianity in Asia, might be safely committed to the members of the College of Fort William, the heads of which institution have hitherto consisted of the senior Chaplains to the Presidency of Bengal. The effects, which might be gradually produced on the minds of the well educated natives, by the simple dispersion of the Scriptures, would fully reward the labour and expence of such a measure, by disseminating amongst them Christian principles, and by preparing them for the rejection of Pagan errors and superstition, and the formal reception of the Christian religion. It cannot, however, be reasonably expected, that any measure of this kind, unsupported by other means of promoting the instruction and civilization of the natives, can be speedily or extensively successful. Compared with the great body of the people in every country in Asia, the number of those who would either be disposed,

posed, or qualified by a knowledge of letters, to read the Scriptures with attention and understanding, would be very small. The ignorant and servile multitude would still be left amidst the darkness and depravity of their ancient superstition.

Previously, therefore, to the adoption of any direct and comprehensive means for the instruction of the natives in general, there is one measure to be taken, which appears to be of indispensable obligation. There ought to be a visible Establishment of the Christian religion, amongst the British subjects in India. The expediency of such an Establishment, both as the means of perpetuating Christianity amongst our own countrymen, and as a foundation for the ultimate civilization of the natives, has been very ably, and, as it seems, conclusively argued by the proposer of the present inquiry, in his Memoir on that important subject. To prove the propriety or necessity of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India, a view is given in that work of the very inadequate state of the English Church at the present time, in our Oriental empire. Various evils of great magnitude are pointed out as resulting from this national deficiency, both as they respect the European and the native inhabitants of India. With the former of these, except as they are connected with the latter, the present discussion is not immediately concerned.

The consequences of the want of religious instruction, and the neglect of religious institutions, which have hitherto been so lamentably conspicuous throughout India, cannot but have been highly prejudicial, not only to our countrymen as individuals, but to the national reputation and interests. Although the gross reflexions which were formerly accustomed to be thrown out, as to British immorality in the East, (whether justly or not, at least to their
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utmost extent, may be fairly doubted,) have long since ceased to be well founded, it is very generally admitted, that the establishment of Chaplains in Hindustan has been insufficient to preserve even the forms of our holy religion in the greater number of the civil residencies, and military stations; and it may be readily concluded, that such a deficiency is calculated to excite the most unfavourable impressions on the minds of the reflecting natives, with respect to the state of Christianity amongst the English who reside in India. Such an impression, also, it must be observed, will not be less felt, though many of our countrymen, in the absence of all opportunity of public worship, should, as it cannot be doubted is the case, maintain regular habits of private devotion.

It is the *public and authorized* administration of Christian institutions which is required, both as to Europeans and natives, for the purpose of producing any striking and permanent effect. It is well known, that in those parts of the British empire in Hindustan, in which there are no ministers of religion, the Sabbath is so entirely forgotten, that the only circumstance by which it is distinguished is the display of the British Flag; whilst our countrymen openly profane that sacred day, by pursuing their ordinary occupations, in common with the Hindus. This single fact is sufficient to point out the mischiefs which must flow from the insufficiency of the present religious appointments in India. Although we may be allowed to doubt, whether the natives, in general, entertain the opinion which has been ascribed to them, as to the total absence of religious faith in the British residents amongst them, or their entire indifference to it, it is indisputable, that *the appearance* of neglect, which is so manifest around them, must lead them to question their sense of the importance of their national religion, or their sincerity in professing it; and must,

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consequently, dispose them to entertain no very exalted opinion of its excellence ^m.

It is certain, therefore, that if the means of religious instruction and worship should be generally afforded to our countrymen, in situations where the number of British residents is considerable, and a general disposition to avail themselves of those means should be manifested, the respect of the natives of India for the Christian religion, thus *rendered visible* through its institutions, would be proportionably increased, and their minds might be prepared for the favourable reception of more direct measures for their conversion. It needs scarcely be added, that the moral and religious improvement of our countrymen, by means of the opportunities afforded them of Christian instruction, would tend to excite both the attention and the reverence of the natives towards the persons and the religion of those, whose conduct should be thus exemplary.

That some more suitable provision should be made for the due performance of the ordinances of the established religion in our Oriental dominions, has long since been considered as a just and necessary measure. It does not, however, become any private person to decide as to the propriety of the extensive establishment proposed by Dr. Buchanan. It is true, that, by the late cessions and conquests in Hindustan, the revenue of the East India Company has been greatly augmented: but it would be erroneous to conclude, as seems to be intimated ⁿ by that writer, that there is a large *unappropriated surplus* of revenue, beyond the necessary expenditure of the Company ^o. In the present state of East Indian finances,

^m See note T.

ⁿ See Memoir, page 12.

^o See the Christian Observer for May 1806.

objections of a very formidable kind may, indeed, be raised, on the ground of expence, to the full adoption of his plan. The determination of this point rests, however, with those to whom the financial department of the East India Company is entrusted ; and it is earnestly to be hoped, that the subject will be considered with that enlarged and liberal attention, which it undoubtedly deserves. If, under all the existing difficulties of the Company, the establishment proposed by Dr. Buchanan should be deemed too extensive, it may still be practicable to augment the number of Chaplains, so that the military stations, and the principal towns where the assemblage of Europeans is considerable, might be provided with them, without any alarming increase of expenditure. Such an increased establishment might, also, be so organized as to present, what is an object of the highest importance in Asia, *an appearance of national attention and concern*, and of weight and dignity, by the appointment of one or two Ecclesiastics of the Episcopal order, without any additional burden which deserves to be considered in a work of such national magnitude and concern. It has been generally understood, that some measure of this kind has been long in contemplation, and that the execution of it, so far as the increase of Chaplains is concerned, is actually begun.

The necessity of some local and dignified establishment of our national religion, for the purpose of promoting the improvement of the natives of India, and other Oriental regions, can scarcely be doubted by any, who are disposed to consider that measure as obligatory on our principles, or beneficial in its tendency. Independently of the importance of some establishment of that nature, however contracted in its extent, as to its religious influence on our own countrymen, and its probable effects on the minds of the natives, in embodying Christianity, and exhibiting it in a more public

public and commanding point of view, various advantages would be derived from it, towards the accomplishment of the great work of diffusing in Asia the principles and the blessings of our holy religion. In the choice and in the application of appropriate means for promoting this important object, it is obvious, that much local information, and much prudence and judgment, will be required ; and although the direction of every measure of this kind exclusively belongs to the government itself, no persons would be likely to be more interested in its accomplishment, or better qualified by their station and habits to advise and to assist in the execution of such measures, than that body of able and experienced Clergy, who may be entrusted with the superintendence of the ecclesiastical affairs of our Oriental empire. On all these accounts it would seem evident, that an Establishment of the nature which has been now recommended is absolutely required, as a preliminary to the effective organization of any plan for the diffusion of Christian knowledge in Asia.

One important advantage, which would arise out of such an establishment, remains yet to be mentioned ; namely, *the Episcopal power of Ordination* ; both for the purpose of securing a constant supply of Clergymen, for the exercise of sacred functions amongst the European inhabitants of Asia ; and also of providing instructors for the natives. The want of such a power for the former purpose has long been felt and lamented ^p ; and it may be presumed, that, in the course of time, some of the converted natives may be found sufficiently qualified for the ministerial office for the instruction of their own countrymen.

It has been regretted, that Dr. Buchanan, in arguing the expe-

^p Memoir, page 10.

diency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, with reference to the civil and religious improvement of the natives, should not have been more full and explicit in detailing the intermediate steps between the cause and its alleged consequences. Something of this kind has been attempted in the preceding observations. But in order clearly to demonstrate this connexion, nothing further seems in fact to be necessary, than simply to refer to two points which have been already proved; namely, the importance of an Establishment for the promotion of Christianity, not merely among the British residents in India, but also among the Hindus; and the tendency of that religion to civilize and improve mankind.

One additional remark, however, is too momentous to be omitted. The influence of an Episcopal establishment, in promoting Christianity amongst the natives of Asia, will materially depend *on the characters of those who preside over it, and of the various subordinate members who compose it*. Admitting, what it may be hoped would not prove otherwise, that the Oriental Clergy should not only be men of virtue, talents, and learning, but animated with sound and enlightened piety, and apostolic zeal; such as have distinguished many of the Protestant missionaries who have, during the last century, devoted their lives to the service of the Hindus, and whose names are still held in honour amongst them; the most sanguine expectations may be justly formed of the success of their exertions amongst the natives. But, if it may, on the contrary, be allowable to imagine the possibility of their lukewarmness or indifference in the sacred cause of the conversion of the natives; if they should not even feel an ardent desire for the accomplishment of the work; our expectations would be greatly disappointed.

Complaints

Complaints have, indeed^q, been made respecting the characters and dispositions of some of those who have hitherto supported the clerical character amongst our countrymen in Hindustan. It is, however, devoutly to be wished, that in the event of an Ecclesiastical Establishment being given to British India, they, and they only, will be deemed worthy of becoming members of it, whose zeal and anxiety in promoting the instruction of the natives may not only prompt them to advise the best means for accomplishing this great purpose, but may excite them personally to engage in the active labours necessary to effect it; and thus restore to the English Church that character for apostolic earnestness and charity in the conversion of the Heathen, which it once possessed; but which, notwithstanding the patronage and efforts of some of its laudable Societies, which have been already mentioned, cannot, for many centuries, be claimed on her behalf, by the most faithful and zealous of her sons.

^q See Dr. Tennant's Indian Recreations, Vol. I. sect. 9.

SECT. III.

MISSIONS.

 ARGUMENT.

Necessity of some direct and appropriate means for promoting Christian knowledge in Asia—The subject of missions—Opinion of Sir William Jones respecting it—Defence of missions, from Scripture, from the practice of the Christian Church, from rational arguments—Objections answered—Testimonies as to the importance of missions in the East—Success of modern attempts of this kind—Assertions of Dr. Robertson and others refuted—Missions of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge—Swartz—The Baptist missionaries—Character of Asiatic converts—Propriety of some further encouragement of missionaries in India—Proposal of an institution for missionaries in England—general plan of it—Character of a true missionary—his duties—distribution of the Scriptures, and religious tracts.

ALTHOUGH it appears to be undeniable, that the civil and moral improvement of the Pagan and Mohammedan natives of Asia will never be effected by any other means than by the diffusion of Christian knowledge ; and although an Ecclesiastical Establishment seems to be necessary as a previous step towards promoting that desirable object ; it is no less certain, that such an Establishment may subsist in Bengal for a great length of time, without producing any very extensive or important influence, unless some *direct and appropriate means* are used for its accomplishment.

When the expediency of civilizing our Asiatic subjects was agitated in Parliament in the year 1793, a proposition was made for
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an “establishment of missionaries and schoolmasters” for that purpose. The whole design was, however, then postponed, on the ground of the unseasonableness of the time for entering on such an undertaking. A considerable degree of prejudice and jealousy seems, also, to have existed at that period respecting the very idea of employing missionaries as the instruments of diffusing Christianity in Asia. As some institution of the nature then proposed appears, however, to be indispensably necessary for promoting that great design, it may be proper to premise a few observations on the propriety of such a mode of instruction.

In quoting the opinion of the late Sir William Jones respecting the translation of some parts of the Scriptures, for the purpose of dispersing them amongst the well-educated natives of Hindustan, we had occasion to include his general sentiment respecting the probable success of missionaries. “We may assure ourselves,” says that admirable author, “that neither Muselmans nor Hindus “will ever be converted by any mission from the Church of “Rome, *or from any other Church*”.”

An opinion, expressed in so decisive a manner, by one, to whose authority, on every point connected with Oriental literature and manners, the world has been accustomed to pay implicit deference, will, it is to be feared, be considered by many as conclusive of the question. It may, however, be fairly doubted, whether further experience of the dispositions of the Hindus, together with the progress which has been so unexpectedly made, since the establishment of the College of Fort William, in the study of the Oriental languages and literature, and the diminished prejudices of

* See the passage as before quoted, page 130.

the Brahmins ; or whether, above all, a more patient consideration of the subject of missions, might not have tended to alter, or, at least, to soften, somewhat of the rigour of that determination. Yet, although it would have been highly gratifying to have been supported in a contrary opinion by that of Sir William Jones, it is warranted by such a combination of evidence and authority, as to be fully equal to maintain its ground, though deprived of that advantage.

The propriety and the necessity of sending missionaries for the conversion of heathen nations to the Christian faith, rest on the authority of Scripture, the practice of the apostolic age, the example of the Church in every succeeding century, and the reasonableness of the measure itself.

The commission which was given by the divine Author of Christianity to his Apostles, just before his ascension^s, is alone a sufficient apology for Christian missions in all ages : “ Go ye, and “ teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, “ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you : *and lo, I “ am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*” It cannot be maintained, that this commission must be restricted to the Apostles, for this simple and decisive reason ; that, as the promise of encouragement and support to those who should engage in the arduous work of propagating Christianity is expressly extended to the end of the world, it necessarily follows, that the duty, for which such a promise was provided, must be commensurate to it in duration.

^s Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

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But it may be said, that the Apostles possessed the power of working miracles, and that this essentially distinguished them from all others who should in after-ages attempt to convert the heathen. To this it may be replied, that the evidence of their divine commission by no means appears to have rested wholly on miracles, although they undoubtedly formed a primary and important part of it. The historical and internal evidences of the Gospel, abstracted from every circumstance of a miraculous nature, were almost equally insisted on, as those which ought to weigh with every reasonable mind, and as imposing the duty of receiving it on every one to whom such proofs should be fairly presented. Obedience, also, to divine revelation is binding, not only on those who witness the performance of miracles by the person who propounds it, but on those to whom it is made known by one who brings incontestable evidence of miracles having been originally wrought in attestation of Christianity.

Miraculous powers were clearly not in all cases essential to the propagation of Christianity even in the Apostolic age. Many preached to the Gentiles who were destitute of the power of working them; and the Scriptures nowhere mention the possession of it as a necessary qualification or condition for spreading the Gospel. If the case were otherwise, it would, moreover, follow, that, when miraculous gifts ceased in the Church, Christianity would also have ceased to be promulgated in the heathen world. But it has already appeared¹, that missionaries laboured zealously and successfully in the conversion of Pagan nations during many centuries after the period, at which they were unquestionably withdrawn.

¹ See the Brief Historic View prefixed, *passim*.

Miracles were necessary in the earliest ages, (amongst other reasons,) because the Gospel was to be preached throughout the world in a short time, and by a few persons, whose lives and labours would otherwise have been inadequate to its successful and extensive propagation. But the Church of Christ was sufficiently established during the first three centuries^u, to admit of its being left to the ordinary superintendence and support of its divine Author. Not that it is to be concluded, that, because these more evident and extraordinary testimonies of its heavenly origin were withdrawn, the propagation of Christianity was no longer an object of the divine concern, or any part of the duty of the Christian Church. The promise of its exalted Head, that he would be with it to the end of the world, constituted, as it has been already observed, both an implied obligation on its governors to extend its limits, and an encouragement to engage in the important work. And although the difficulties in the case of every attempt to evangelize the heathen are, in consequence, greatly increased, the assistance and blessing of Heaven are confidently to be expected and relied on, in the zealous and faithful use of those rational means of awakening and instructing them which are proposed; and the success, which is at any time experienced, is equally to be ascribed to the influence of Him, “from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift” to man. “The exertion of this power,” as it has been justly observed^x, “is not miraculous, because it is not a deviation from the regular

^u It is not, however, intended by this remark to deny that miraculous gifts were not in a certain degree continued in the Church, and exercised on evidently great and necessary occasions, subsequent to this period. See Brief Historic View, and note D.

^x See Mr. Venn’s Address to four Missionaries to Africa. Appendix to the Sixth Anniversary Sermon before the Society for Missions to Africa and the East.

“system;

“ system ; it acts according to an appointed course ; it has been
 “ promised generally ; and it operates daily in purifying the hearts
 “ of those who receive the Gospel : but certainly the efficacy at-
 “ tending the preaching of the word in reforming mankind, is as
 “ truly and properly a divine work, as the most signal miracle
 “ which was ever performed. The difference lies not in the
 “ power, but in *the mode* of its application.”

But it may, perhaps, be said, that the difficulties of the work are too great to be overcome, and that the success of modern missions is not such as to excite very sanguine hopes of producing any salutary effect by extending them in Asia.

The difficulties which oppose the progress of the Christian missionary in the present day in any Pagan country, and more especially in Hindustan, are, undoubtedly, of a very formidable nature. They have, however, evidently appeared to be lessening within the last twenty years, particularly with respect to one great obstacle, namely, of our ignorance of the native languages.

But whatever may be the nature of these difficulties, the question may be resolved into a narrow compass. Do we believe that the kingdom of Christ, according to a series of undoubted prophecies, is to be extended throughout the world in some future age ; and are not means to be employed similar to those which were originally appointed for that purpose ? Is the want of universality objected to our holy religion by the infidel ; and are attempts for the practical confutation of such an objection to be discouraged and frustrated ? Are human efforts concerned in the accomplish-

’ See Part II. chap. 1.

ment of most of the benevolent designs of the divine Providence for the good of mankind ; and are they in this, the most important of all, to be excluded ? Or shall we, in the true spirit of enthusiasm, expect some miraculous direction of Providence, and neglect the plainest indications of the divine will ? If the answers to these questions should appear sufficiently obvious, it may be confidently added in the language of an Apostle, with respect to heathen nations, “ How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not “ heard ? and how shall they hear without a *preacher* ? and how “ shall they preach *except they be sent* ? ”

This is the mode which God has ever adopted, in order to effect any considerable reformation amongst mankind. He has been pleased to make men dependent on each other in various ways ; and to communicate his blessings to them in general by means of their fellow-creatures. Every nation which has embraced the Christian faith has, in some measure, owed its reception of so great a blessing to the piety and zeal of disinterested men, whom the love of Christ, and compassion for their brethren, constrained to proclaim to it the glad tidings of the Gospel. If Asia, therefore, ever receive the faith of Christ, it must partly owe it to the successful labours of missionaries.

Testimonies in support of their employment in the propagation of Christianity in unenlightened countries might easily be multiplied. But the practice of the Christian Church, in its purest, and even during its darkest ages, is alone sufficient to shew the sense which has ever been entertained of that measure by the most competent judges of its propriety.

With respect to India, however, it may not seem a circumstance
to

to be altogether disregarded, that some of the younger servants of the East India Company in the College of Fort William should have strenuously pleaded for the introduction of missionaries, for the purpose of promoting the improvement of the natives. The expediency of this measure is thus argued by one of the students² alluded to. “ From the peculiar opportunities enjoyed by Christian missionaries of investigating the spirit of Hindu theology, and of exploring the structure of their language ; but more particularly from the unreserved communication which it must ever be their object to encourage and promote, much solid information on these important points may justly be expected. *Numerous, indeed, are the advantages to be derived from the ardent diligence and unremitting toil of well-informed and zealous missionaries.* Disengaged from the fond attachment of their native country, impressed by the deepest sense of duty, and eager to diffuse the divine light of revelation, may we not expect to see this night of more than Egyptian darkness succeeded by the glorious cloud-dissipating dawn of Christianity ? And may we not hope to find this ignorant and deluded people learning justice from its Law, and mercy from its Gospel ? ”

Of the importance of missionaries in India, another intelligent and more experienced witness, then resident in that country, may be advantageously heard. “ If my statement,” he observes^a, “ be really applicable to the general character of the natives, high and low, a change can only be effected gradually ; but if any thing is done, it must be by means of introducing among the natives men who possess an intimate knowledge of their lan-

² Mr. Martin, in a volume of Essays by Students in the College of Fort William, page 58.

^a See Letter to Dr. Vincent, ut supra.

“ guages,

“ guages, and who shew examples in their own persons of religion, virtue, contempt of riches, (such, and such only, ought the missionaries to be,) patience, and conciliating manners. Would the establishment of many such men have no beneficial effect on the morality of the natives? Surely it would—”

But it has been frequently and confidently asserted, that *the success* of modern missions in general, and particularly of those which have been sent into Asia, has not been sufficient to encourage the continuance of such a mode of propagating the Christian religion in that continent.

So far as this assertion respects the missions from the Church of Rome in the sixteenth and two following centuries, especially those which were conducted by the Jesuits, there can be no doubt that it is partly well founded; but the reasons of their want of real though not of nominal success have already been stated^b, and are too well known to require any particular exposition of them.

The same sentiment has, however, been extended to the labours of Protestant missionaries. Their success has been said to have been very trifling, and the conversions they may have made to have been of an equivocal and unimportant nature. “To convert or to be converted,” says Dr. Robertson, “are ideas equally repugnant to the principles most deeply rooted in” the mind of a Hindu, “nor can either the Catholic or Protestant missionaries in India boast of having overcome these prejudices, except among a few in the lowest casts, or of such as have lost their cast altogether. Notwithstanding the labours of missionaries for upwards of two hundred

^b See Brief Historic View prefixed, page 50.

“ years,

“ years,” (says a late ingenious writer ^c;) “ and the establishments
 “ of different Christian nations who support and protect them ;
 “ out of perhaps one hundred millions of Hindus, there are not
 “ twelve thousand Christians, and those almost entirely Chancelas,
 “ or outcasts ^d.”

If these assertions of the eloquent historian, and of the writer from whom he quotes some part of them, were well founded, they might form a very strong objection not only to the employment of missionaries, but to *the very design* of propagating Christianity in the East. But the truth is, that they are by no means supported by facts. Subsequent inquiry and information have shewn, that the success of the labours of Protestant missionaries in India has been far more considerable than the writers in question have represented it, and of such a nature as to excite sanguine hopes of further progress, under the more favourable circumstances which actually exist.

The admirable apology of Mr. Swartz^e, which has been already referred to, and which was occasioned by some injurious assertions respecting his success as a missionary, and the character of the native Christians, contains a simple but energetic statement, which alone affords decisive evidence of the importance of the East India mission. The singular modesty of the venerable missionary, a man *antiquâ virtute ac fide*, restrained him from dwelling on the extraordinary success of himself, and of his fellow labourer Mr. Gerické, (now also removed from his arduous and honourable employ-

^c Sketches relating to the History, Religion, Learning, and Manners of the Hindus, page 48.

^d See Robertson's Disquisition concerning Ancient India, note 40.

^e See Letter of Swartz, ut supra.

ment,)

ment,) in the conversion of multitudes of the natives to Christianity. He confined himself principally to an enumeration of well known facts, to prove the important secular services which they had rendered to the English government on several occasions of a very difficult and critical nature, and the confidence which the natives reposed in their integrity. These services of the missionaries were acknowledged by the government of Madras, and by the Rajah of Tanjore. The latter prince expressed his sense of them by a grant of land for the support of the mission in his dominions; and appointed Mr. Swartz guardian to his family. The death of this Apostolic missionary was lamented by the Hindus as a public and irreparable calamity; and his memory was perpetuated by the respectful and affectionate attachment of the present Rajah of Tanjore; who has erected a monument to him in the Christian church which is in his capital, to manifest his veneration and gratitude *for him whom he calls his father and his friend*^f.

It is to be regretted, that no detailed and minute account has hitherto been published of the numbers of the natives, who have been converted to Christianity since the establishment of the Protestant mission in India at the commencement of the last century, and of the nature of their acquaintance with our holy faith^g. The general declarations of competent witnesses must therefore be referred to.

It appears from various undoubted testimonies, that by the la-

^f See Society's Proceedings for 1801.

^g Such an account might, perhaps, be collected by referring to the periodical Proceedings of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, so far as the missionaries under its patronage are concerned, and would furnish a satisfactory reply to the objection now under consideration.

bours of Ziegenbalgh^h, and his immediate successors, Christian Churches were planted in different parts on the coast of Coromandel, which have been constantly increasing their numbers to the present time.

The zealous exertions of the venerable Swartz, during the period of half a century, were crowned with signal success in several different provinces in the south of the peninsula; and the labours of Mr. Gerické, and his associates, have been, and continue to be, eminently prosperousⁱ.

Of the rapid extension of Christianity in the districts near Cape Comorin, the following animating account is given by the last-mentioned excellent missionary: “ When in my journey I came
 “ near to the extremity of the peninsula, I found whole villages
 “ waiting anxiously for my coming, to be further instructed and
 “ baptized. They had got acquainted with our native priest
 “ in that country, and the catechists and Christians, and had
 “ learned from them the catechism; which those who could write
 “ copied, to learn it themselves at their leisure. When they heard
 “ of my coming, they broke their idols to pieces, and converted
 “ their temples into Christian Churches, in which I instructed and
 “ baptized them, (in some about 200, in others about 300;)
 “ formed them into Christian congregations, procured for them
 “ catechists and schoolmasters, and made them choose, in each
 “ place, four elders. These examples awakened *the whole coun-*
 “ *try*; and when I was about to leave it, the inhabitants of many

^h A particular and interesting account of this admirable missionary's labours and success may be seen in Millar's History of the Propagation of Christianity, Vol. II.

ⁱ In testimony of their success, see Dr. Ker's Report, already referred to.

“ more villages sent messages to me, begging of me to remain a couple of months longer in the country, and to do in their villages the good work I had done in those of their neighbours ^h. ”

The success of *the Danish missionaries* at Tranquebar appears to have been equally great ⁱ. And in general it may be observed, that as those who are employed on the coast of Coromandel have each separate congregations and districts, and travel to the distance of nearly one hundred and fifty miles from the coast, to visit other bodies of converted Hindus, who are assisted by native catechists and schoolmasters, the number of their converts must be considerable.

Of the progress of *the Baptist* and other Protestant missionaries, the following account is given by Mr. Carey ^k: “ The success of the Gospel has been but slow with us ; at times it has been more rapid. At and about Tanjore, in a short time, many have turned from idols, under father Swartz’s ministry. I am also told, that, of late, many have been converted in the more southern country, about Palamcotta.” The progress of the Baptist missionaries, though so moderately stated by Mr. Carey, has, however, of late been more considerable. They have already baptized upwards of one hundred Hindus, and their translations of the Scriptures, and the various other means which they are employing, may be justly expected greatly to increase their numbers.

Something yet remains to be said as to *the character of the con-*

^h See the Christian Observer for August, 1803.

ⁱ See their Letter to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, February 19, 1799.

^k See Proceedings of the Baptist Mission.

verted *Hindus*, and the nature of their acquaintance with Christianity. Upon this subject it is, also, necessary to hear the evidence of residents in India.

Dr. Ker, in his report respecting the Christian Churches on the coast of Malabar, speaking of the St. Thomé Christians, bears this honourable testimony to them : “ The character of these people is
“ marked by a *striking superiority over the heathens in every moral*
“ *excellence* ; and they are *remarkable for their veracity and plain*
“ *dealing.*”

“ With regard to the question,” says an author already quoted ¹,
“ which has been agitated at home, on the expediency of sending
“ missionaries, (a question highly disgraceful to its opposers,) it
“ may be sufficient to know, that *the native Protestant converts*
“ *are, when compared with a like number of other natives, the*
“ *most orderly and respectable class* in the country. That they
“ consist chiefly of the *lower or Pariar class, is a vulgar error* ;
“ and, instead of being, as is often asserted, despised and con-
“ temptuously treated by their fellow natives, they are *universally*
“ *respected* : by the latter term, I would be understood to say,
“ that, on account of their general good behaviour in society, they
“ are esteemed to possess *more probity, and better dispositions* to-
“ wards social kindness, than any other natives.”

“ Our intention,” says the venerable Swartz, “ is not to boast :
“ but this I may safely say, *that many of those people who have*
“ *been instructed, have left this world with comfort, and with a*
“ *well grounded hope of everlasting life.* That some of those who

¹ See Letter to Dr. Vincent.

“ have been instructed and baptized have abused the benefit of instruction, is certain ; but all sincere servants of God, nay, even the Apostles, have experienced this grief.”

“ With regard to the inward religion of the heart among the converted heathen,” says Mr. Carey, “ I beg leave to mention what the late Mr. Swartz said on his death-bed of the Christians at Tanjore ; ‘ There is *in all a good beginning* : if another says, ‘ but there is nothing perfect ; let him examine himself, and then judge.’ “ We cannot speak,” say the Baptist missionaries respecting their converts, “ of these effects in the Christians of Hindustan, as existing *in such a degree as we could wish*, nor as unaccompanied with many faults ; yet, *comparing them with what they were*, and with what *the rest of their countrymen still are*, *the change is great and manifest* ^m.”

After the preceding brief review of the necessity and importance of missions, and of the actual success which has attended the feeble efforts hitherto made in this benevolent and interesting work, the propriety and expediency of this measure will scarcely be disputed by any, who are really disposed to use the most effectual means for the moral improvement of the natives of Asia. It will not, however, be deemed sufficient for the purpose of the present inquiry, to have pointed out the advantages of missions, or to have simply recommended the adoption of that method of diffusing the light of Christianity more extensively throughout Asia.

If, as it has been already shewn, it be the duty and the policy

^m See Proceedings of the Baptist mission ; and, for other testimonies to the success of modern missions, see the Moravian Accounts, confirmed, with respect to South Africa, by Mr. Barrow.

of Great Britain to make some direct and active efforts for promoting Christian knowledge amongst its Oriental subjects; and if the labours of missionaries form one of the most efficacious means of accomplishing this important object; it follows, that suitable encouragement should be afforded by the government for this purpose. Hitherto, the Protestant missionaries have been barely tolerated in India; but after the long course of years, during which not only the safety, but the beneficial tendency of their exertions has been experienced, it may reasonably be expected, that something more of direct countenance and support should be extended to them.

The least and lowest measure of this nature which can be adopted would be to license, under proper regulations, a certain number of missionaries; to permit them to form stations, and use all rational and prudent means for the instruction of the natives; and to give them every degree of encouragement, short of an ostensible commission to convert them. The propriety and the safety of so moderate a measure as this can scarcely be denied by any, who are impartial and competent judges of the subject.

With respect to any further and more direct attempts to propagate Christianity in India, much caution ought unquestionably to be exercised. For, notwithstanding the habitual apathy and the lessening prejudices of the Hindus, it would be presuming too much to affirm, that no measures, except such as partook of absolute violence, would alarm them. On the contrary, if the natives of India, in consequence of any striking indications of such a nature, were to conclude, that it was the fixed intention of the British government to convert them to the Christian faith, they would probably feel considerable alarm. The Mohammedans,
who

who are alive to every circumstance which affects their bigotry, would be the first to entertain such an apprehension, and then would zealously disseminate it amongst the Hindus.

This is a consideration which tends to produce no small degree of hesitation in recommending more vigorous and ostensible measures for the attainment of the object in question. Were it not that the open and avowed interference of the British government in India should be studiously kept out of sight, and that the minds of its native subjects are not yet sufficiently prepared for the execution of such a plan, it would be proposed to establish, either at Calcutta, or in its vicinity, an Institution or College for missionaries, throughout India and the Eastern world. This establishment would be, for the purpose of missions, what the College of Fort William has been represented to be, for the translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues. It would form the centre of religious instruction; whence, as from another Iona^m, the rays of Christian light might proceed to illumine and cheer the benighted regions around it. But the state of India is not yet sufficiently advanced to warrant the recommendation of this plan. Notwithstanding, therefore, the obvious advantages which the members of such an institution would possess, as to the acquisition both of the Oriental languages, and of local information in general, it is not intended, in the first instance, to propose its adoption; although it is hoped, that some establishment of this nature may eventually be formed.

We may, however, venture to recommend, that an institution of a similar kind be founded in England, which, without incurring the

^m Journey to the western isles of Scotland, by Dr. Johnson.

danger of offending the prejudices, or awakening the fears, of the Hindus, might combine many of the advantages of the Oriental plan, and be rendered almost equally subservient to their civil and religious improvement. The objects, which such an establishment would embrace, are chiefly the preparation of candidates for the office of missionaries, both by cultivating the Eastern languages, and other qualifications necessary for duly sustaining it; and the education of native Asiatic youths, selected on account of their talents and dispositions, for the purpose of becoming the future instruments of instructing their Pagan or Mohammedan brethren. Respecting the importance of the point last mentioned, it was long since observed by Cerri, Secretary to the College de Propagandâ Fide, that *one native* thus educated would probably be more serviceable than many missionaries sent from Europe. The Jesuit Acostaⁿ expressed the same opinion, that the natives, when rightly educated, are the most proper for this work.

The celebrated Roman Catholic establishment, de Propagandâ Fide, of which some account has already been given^o, may be considered as affording a precedent, though by no means a model, for the formation of the proposed institution in England. The former was, indeed, less intended to diffuse the principles of genuine Christianity, than to support and to extend the doctrines and jurisdiction of the Papal see. Its objects were, in consequence, various and complicated, and its funds and establishment ample and magnificent. But the glory of this far-famed institution is departed. The means employed by its agents for the conversion of Pagan nations were too secular and unchristian to produce any

ⁿ De procurandâ Indorum Salute, lib. iv. cap. 8. 379.

^o Historic View prefixed, p. 65.

solid or permanent effects ; and since the dominion of the French in Italy, by which its funds have been destroyed^p, the missionaries of the Propaganda have been depressed, and either seem weary of their fruitless task, or carry it on with a feebleness, which gives little countenance to the hopes of their employers.

A more appropriate model for the proposed English institution may be found in that which was recommended in Holland by the learned Walæus^q, for the education of missionaries to be employed in India ; and which was actually established in the year 1622, and, during the short period of its continuance, sent out twelve missionaries of eminent qualifications for that important work. It appears also, that the Leyden divine did not confine his plan to the European College, but extended it to the formation of one of a similar kind in India. This, however, for the reasons already stated, is not now proposed ; particularly as the objects of such an Oriental institution may, for the present, be sufficiently secured by means of the clerical establishment in Bengal.

The zeal of the Church of Rome in the former of these establishments, and the example of our Protestant brethren in the latter, may be justly urged to excite the attention, and to kindle the ardour, of our own nation, to imitate what was truly laudable in their conduct.

In a discussion of this nature, it is obvious, that a few general

^p Tennant's Thoughts on India, p. 182.

^q Antonii Walæi Opera, tom. ii. 437. Neceffitas ac forma Collegii seu Seminarii Indici.

ideas only can be suggested. The plan itself, together with the particulars respecting it, must be left to the consideration of those to whom it belongs to determine every measure relating to British India, and whose opportunities of information and judgment render them most competent to decide upon this subject. The expence of such an institution as that which has been proposed could not, it is presumed, be such as to excite any alarm in the minds of those who are most nearly concerned with the financial affairs of the East India Company. The recent Collegiate Establishment at Hertford appears to afford peculiar facilities and advantages for that which has been just considered. Without much additional expence or trouble, the means of acquiring the Oriental languages might be extended to the small number of those who would successively be preparing for the office of missionaries in the East; and the whole plan might with propriety be considered as an appendage to that important institution.

The object of the proposed Establishment being to prepare a certain number of persons to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity in unenlightened nations, it is highly important, that all those who may be disposed to devote their lives to that honourable, but laborious and self-denying work, should be men of suitable talents, dispositions, and acquirements. *Their character* is, however, a point of so much consequence, that it may not be unnecessary to dwell somewhat longer upon it. Some observations of a similar nature were made respecting that of the different members of the ecclesiastical Establishment proposed to be given to British India. But the character of missionaries may perhaps be justly said to be even more important. The work in which they are to be engaged is of a more arduous and discouraging nature: the difficulties which they have to encounter require both peculiar qualifications, and an

extraordinary measure of those endowments which are more common ; and their success more immediately depends on their personal conduct. It has happened, somewhat strangely, that the office of a missionary has been treated in this Protestant and religious country with indifference and disregard, if not, sometimes, even with suspicion and contempt. And this circumstance (may it not be owing to a more degenerate cause !) may, perhaps, account for the very rare occurrence of English names in the annals of modern missions.

The employment of a missionary is, however, in itself one of the most dignified ^s, and in its consequences one of the most beneficial, amongst men ; and calls for qualifications both of the understanding and the heart of no ordinary nature. In many of the attempts which have of late years been made to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity in uncivilized countries, the persons who have been engaged in this arduous enterprise, though pious and well-disposed, have been, for the most part, deficient in those qualities, which are essentially necessary to form a successful missionary.

Whoever aspires to the honour of undertaking this important office should possess good natural abilities, an aptness, derived partly from previous exercise, to acquire the knowledge of foreign languages ; a versatility of mind sufficient to enable him to pass with ease to the acquisition of the habits, dispositions, and manners of different nations ; and a judgment capable of directing him to the most proper methods of gaining the confidence and arresting the attention of the natives ; of seizing favourable opportuni-

^s See the truly apostolic and eloquent Letter of Archbishop Wake to the missionaries Ziegenbalgh and Grundler, in Dr. Buchanan's Memoir.

ties for pressing his great object, of avoiding unnecessary offences, and of adopting the most suitable means of instruction. To these talents he should add a competent measure of learning, and a considerable share of general knowledge, particularly of that which relates to the characters and dispositions of mankind. These intellectual endowments, however, though of high importance, form, notwithstanding, but one part, and that the most easily to be obtained, of the character of an accomplished missionary. *The moral and religious qualifications*, which are even still more indispensably required in him, remain to be mentioned. Scarcely any other employment demands so many, and those of such rare and difficult attainment. A Christian missionary should, in this respect, be “*εχ' ὁ τυχων ἀνθρ.*” His piety should be elevated far above the common standard, and his tempers and habits should be eminently holy. In his breast the love of God and of man should burn with a pure and fervent, with a mild and steady flame. With a deep impression of the infinite value of the Gospel; with a clear understanding of its doctrines and its duties; with ardent love to his divine Lord and Master, and zeal for the extension of his kingdom amongst men; with a heart dead to the ambitious pursuits and the self-indulgent pleasures of the world; with a mind expecting, and capable of contending with, the dangers, difficulties, and discouragements of his undertaking, irrevocably fixed in his design, and fervently desirous of promoting the present and future welfare of his fellow-creatures, by their conversion to the knowledge of Christ—he should stand forth as the ambassador of Heaven; exhibiting, in his own dispositions and conduct, a pure and unfeigned portrait of that divine religion which he professes, and imparting to all around him that heavenly light which can alone guide them into the way of peace¹.

¹ See note U.

Such, in a considerable measure, should be the character of every one who undertakes the office of a missionary. For want of men thus qualified, many well-intended but injudicious attempts of this nature have either completely or partially failed. But with such labourers in the great vineyard of the Oriental world, the most sanguine expectations of success may, in a due course of years, and in conjunction with other necessary means, be justly entertained.

It may, perhaps, be objected, that men of this exalted character have been but rarely seen in these later ages of the Church, and would now be rarely obtained. Deficient, however, as the Church at large, and particularly our own, has lately been in this respect, men of this elevated spirit have appeared; and their example, aided by the various concurring circumstances of the present era, may, possibly, excite the emulation of some to follow them in their bright career. The successful labours of Elliott and of Brainerd, amongst the uncivilized tribes of North American Indians; of the Moravian missionaries on the frozen shores of Greenland, and the dreary coast of Labrador^u; of Swartz and Gerické, amidst the fervours of the southern provinces of India; are sufficient to rescue the two last centuries of the Christian Church from the charge of entire indifference and supineness in the great work of propagating the faith of Christ amongst heathen nations; to relieve it from all fear of the interruption of the watchful care and the gracious cooperation of its exalted Head; and to animate the exertions and invigorate the

^u Two of these venerable missionaries have reached their ninety-second year, and two others have passed their eighty-seventh, having spent their whole lives from an early age in the service of their divine Master. See the last Report of the Missions of the United Brethren.

hopes of all his faithful servants, in promoting his kingdom throughout the world. The zeal which has of late years been evinced in Great Britain by Christians of every denomination, in pursuing this great object, may, also, excite the justest expectations of the prevalence of such a spirit amongst us, as may induce many, duly qualified both by their intellectual and moral attainments, to undertake the arduous employment of missionaries in the Eastern world*.

The peculiar duties of a missionary, and the various methods which he should adopt in the faithful discharge of his sacred office, fall not within the immediate province of this inquiry†. His first great object, as soon as his knowledge of the native languages, and other favourable circumstances, should afford him suitable opportunities, ought evidently to be to make known to his unenlightened brethren around him, with simplicity and earnestness, and in a manner adapted to their capacities, the pure and unsophisticated doctrines and precepts of the Gospel.

One important part, however, of his duty, which we would

* The deficiency of English missionaries may, perhaps, be partly attributed to the want of publicity respecting the subject in this country. Hence the characters of men of Christian piety and zeal are early formed to habits not altogether calculated to fit them for an office, which in after life they might feel desirous of undertaking. But in the event of a more extensive field for missionary labours being opened in the East, it may be hoped, that, by the notoriety which such a circumstance would occasion, young men of suitable talents and dispositions might be directed to look forward to that employment as the great business of their lives, and to prepare themselves accordingly.

† These points are excellently discussed and illustrated in two charges to missionaries, the one by Dr. Glaspey, in the Proceedings of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, for the year 1793; the other by Mr. Venn, as before referred to.

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particularly notice and recommend, is *the printing and distribution of the Scriptures*, and of *short tracts* on the nature and evidences of Christianity, and on other moral and religious subjects, in Hindustan, and in other parts of the Oriental world, as opportunities might be afforded. The utility of this plan, so far as relates to the dispersion of the Scriptures, has, as we have already stated, received the sanction of the opinion of Sir William Jones; and the advantage of the whole of it is confirmed by the experience of those who have hitherto been concerned in missions. “Doubtless,” says an eminent Protestant missionary in Bengal^z, “various means contribute towards the propagation of Christianity; but of late, *the printing and dispersing of the New Testament, and small tracts*, seem to have the greatest effect.” “*The printing press*,” observe his associates, “may be viewed in the same light as the school; but its immediate action is more extensive; it being the means of sending Bibles, parts of Bibles, and small tracts, into all parts of Bengal, and some other parts of Hindustan. Good effects have followed the dispersion of these tracts; and we have good encouragement to hope, that God may still continue to make them useful; not to mention the remote effect which must arise from the press, in gradually exciting a spirit of reading, and consequently of inquiry^a.” In every account which has been published of the proceedings of the mission established at Karafs, on the frontiers of the Russian empire, it has also appeared, that considerable effects have been produced by the dispersion of a short Arabic tract, written by Mr. Brunton, for the purpose of exposing the imposture of Mohammedism. It has excited much discussion amongst the people in general, and has

^z Mr. Carey, Letter to Mr. Morris.

^a Letter of the missionaries to the Society in England.

been particularly useful in abating the prejudices and convincing the minds even of some of the Mohammedan priests.

The instruction of children forms another material branch of the duty of every missionary. But this is a point which deserves to be more fully, and separately considered.

S E C T. IV.

SCHOOLS.

 ARGUMENT.

Importance of early instruction—Testimonies in favour of it—Proposal respecting the establishment of Schools in India—General interference of the British government.

THE importance of early education in promoting the civilization and the moral improvement of nations, is a truth which has been so frequently demonstrated, and is now so generally acknowledged, that it is by no means necessary to adduce many arguments in its support. Ignorance, superstition, vice, and misery, have ever been found closely connected with each other, and form a train of evils, which can only be effectually removed by the diffusion of moral and religious knowledge. Such is, also, the nature of man, that the fittest season for its communication is obviously that of youth. In early life, the human mind is, for the most part, free from the influence both of prejudice and of habit, and is open to receive any impressions, and to be moulded to any form, which those who are entrusted with the care of its instruction may desire.

The education of children has, accordingly, been an object, to which those who have been solicitous to influence the opinions
and

and principles of mankind, have generally directed their attention.

At a very early period of the Christian Church, Constantine the Great, amongst other means which he adopted for the depression of Paganism, and the diffusion of Christianity, erected many schools throughout the empire; a measure which the Apostate Julian, for the purpose of counteracting the efforts of his illustrious predecessor, did not fail to imitate, on succeeding to the imperial throne ^a.

The extraordinary success of Mohammedism throughout Africa and the East is not merely to be attributed either to the force of arms, or to the licentious nature of that imposture. ^b The Mohammedans are indefatigable in their endeavours to make proselytes. For this purpose they use persuasion, as well as force. The great instrument, by which they both maintain and promote their religion, is their industry in *educating children* ^c, brought from every country in their neighbourhood, or to which they have access. There is scarcely a Mohammedan country, in which there are not seminaries for educating the children of other nations, most of whom they either ransom from slavery, or subject to it. The Turkish empire would probably have been long since crushed under its own weight, had it not been for this zeal of the Mohammedans in disseminating their principles. It is observed, also, by Dr. Robertson ^d, that “ their number in China has been

^a Nazianz. Orat. i. in Julianum.

^b See Thoughts concerning a Mission to Astracan, by the Rev. H. Brunton.

^c See particularly, in proof of this, Park's Travels.

^d Disquisition concerning India, note 40.

“ considerably increased by a practice common among them, of
 “ buying children in years of famine, whom they educate in the
 “ Mohammedan religion.”

A late writer ^e on the subject of India gives it as his opinion, as well as that of the best informed persons, that the most probable means of propagating Christianity in Hindustan is by the instruction of the native youth. He asserts, that the natives have no aversion to commit their children to the tuition of Europeans, but are rather ambitious of their acquiring their accomplishments, from interested motives of advancement in our service; that many natives actually send their children to day-schools, for the purpose of learning the English language, and even purchase elementary books for private application. He considers, that, by affording gratuitous instruction, multitudes of Hindu children in Calcutta might be taught to read and write, and an opportunity might thus be given for putting elementary books of morality into their hands, as introductory to Christianity ^f. “ Our error,” observes the author of the Report to the government of Madras respecting the native Christians on the coast of Malabar, “ has been in
 “ not having long ago established *free schools* throughout every
 “ part of this country, by which the children of the natives
 “ might have learned our language, and become acquainted with
 “ our morality.”

^e Dr. Tennant. He apprehends, that, as there would always be great difficulty in procuring sober and diligent Europeans to instruct the native children, this might be remedied by employing some of the children of Europeans by natives, who are excluded from civil or military employment in our service, and abandoned by their Hindu progenitors, on account of their Christian education. This is a hint, which, with proper cautions, deserves serious attention.

^f Indian Recreations, Vol. I. sect. 22.

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The utility of this measure is in no point of view more apparent, than as it respects *the gradual diffusion of the English language* throughout India. The civilization of the natives, and the confirmation of the British dominion, could scarcely by any other means be more speedily and effectually promoted.

Supposing, however, what appears to be very improbable, from the present favourable disposition of the natives, that but few of them would permit their children to be educated in the proposed manner; the plan which is so successfully followed by the Mohammedans, and which, from purer motives, has been adopted by some of the higher residents in British India, of procuring native children during times of famine, or other seasons of distress, and by various other practicable means, might be advantageously resorted to. The children thus obtained might be supported at very little expence, and educated in the principles of Christianity.

The importance of schools for native children has been felt in every modern undertaking to propagate the Christian religion among the heathen. They have been constantly attached to the stations of the Danish and other Protestant missionaries in India; and are considered as a nursery for the Church, and one of the most useful branches of their missions.

In Ceylon, previous to the establishment of the British authority, the Dutch had been particularly zealous in the formation of schools in every district. These are still maintained and enlarged, and are in a very vigorous and flourishing condition. The

§ The sentiments of the Danish missionaries may be seen in the second volume of Millar's History, p. 485.

children in these schools are taught both to read and write the native and the English languages, and are diligently instructed in the Christian religion. At the mission station of Karaïs, *the leading object* of those who superintend it is to ransom young slaves, for the purpose of educating them as Christians.

The speculative opinions and the practical experience of all who have directed their attention to this subject seem thus to concur in strenuously recommending the establishment of schools, wherever it is intended to disseminate Christian knowledge; and although it would be more advantageous, that they should be formed and directed by some appropriate institution, and that they should be subject to the superintendence of missionaries and resident Clergy, *they are of such primary importance*, that if even *no other measure should be eventually taken* towards the improvement of the natives, *the establishment of free schools* should on no consideration be neglected. The trial of their utility ought at least to be made at some of the principal English settlements in India; and if, as cannot be doubted, it should prove favourable to the adoption of the proposed plan, schools might be gradually extended throughout our empire, as circumstances and opportunities should direct.

The establishment of schools being a measure which must necessarily be undertaken by the British government, we may be allowed in connexion with this subject to offer a few observations, in addition to those which have been already made, on the propriety of its *general interference* in promoting the propagation of Christianity.

Protection

Protection from persecution on account of religious opinions is one of the chief encouragements to the investigation of truth in any country ; and the mild and tolerating spirit of our Oriental government, contrasted with that which characterized the Portuguese and the Mohammedan dominion, is, no doubt, one of the causes which has contributed to the increase and stability of our empire. But this toleration of native superstitions may degenerate into culpable indifference to our own purer faith ; and has, in fact, been censured on that ground. There is no doubt, that the appearance of any disposition on the part of government to compel its subjects to adopt the Christian faith would be opposed ; and under a disavowal of every species of compulsion, whether direct or indirect, the attempt to convert them must be made with much caution and discretion. That the government must lend its cordial assistance in this important work, is indispensable to its success ; but that assistance may be substantially afforded, without any display to create alarm, or furnish a pretence for exciting it. Thus, whilst every degree of compulsion should be carefully avoided, the laudable example of a late Governor General ^h, in suppressing one inhuman practice of the Hindus, respecting the destruction of infants, may evidently be followed with advantage ; and in this manner, many other cruel and immoral parts of the native superstition may be effectually restrained and abolished.

It is remarkable, however, that, notwithstanding the general protection which is now afforded by the English government to the various religious sects existing in India, and although the Hindu who is converted to Christianity, and is, in consequence, ex-

^h The Marquis Wellesley.

pelled from his Caste, is liable to no personal violence, or to any loss of his rights as a subject ; yet, from the want of precedent in the north of India, of a community of native Christians enjoying political consequence, as in the south, such is the ignorance of the people, that they are said to doubtⁱ, whether their civil liberties are equally secure to them, under the denomination of *Christian*, as under that of Hindu or Muselman ; and not to understand, that we have yet recognized, in our code of native law, any other sect than that of Hindu and Muselman. It is, therefore, of great importance, that this point should be clearly made known to the natives. Measures, also, should undoubtedly be adopted for the peculiar protection^k and employment of those, who, by their conversion to the Christian religion, have incurred the displeasure of their relatives, or sacrificed their worldly interests ; and it is worthy of the attention of government, how far it would be right to extend the same support to the deserving part of the Pariars, or outcasts^l. During the government of the island of Ceylon by the Dutch, particular attention was paid to the encouragement of Christianity in this manner : no native was admitted to any office under it, without professing himself a member of the reformed religion ; and although this was, probably, productive of much hypocrisy, the spirit which dictated such a regulation might be judiciously imitated by our own Eastern government.

The vigorous adoption of measures similar to those which have

ⁱ See Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, note F.

^k See some observations on this subject in the Edinburgh Review, No. 8. p. 318.

^l This has also been suggested by the intelligent writer referred to in the preceding note.

now been proposed could scarcely fail of eventually producing the most important consequences, respecting the civil and moral improvement of Asia. These, however, remain to be considered in the succeeding chapter.

ARGUMENT.

Observations on the effects of the propagation of Christianity throughout the world—Probability that they would be equally beneficial in Asia—Supposed consequences of the adoption of the various means before recommended—Probable effect of the dispersion of the Scriptures in Asia—and of other means of promoting Christian knowledge—Progress of Christianity—Blessings resulting to individual converts—Advantages to Oriental nations, respecting their manufactures and commerce—Literature—Civil and judicial institutions—Civilizing arts and manners—Advantages to Great Britain—Stability and permanence of its Oriental empire—increased commercial advantages—Its fame and reputation from the promotion of Christianity in Asia—Accomplishment of prophecies—General recapitulation of motives to this work—Conclusion.

CH A P. III.

The Consequences of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental languages, and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia.

IT has frequently been objected to suggestions respecting the religious improvement of our Indian subjects, and, indeed, of the natives of Asia at large, that their own superstitions are adapted to their peculiar genius and character, and that they would derive no material advantages from any change in their sentiments and habits. This objection may be traced, partly to an unfounded idea of the purity and excellence of the Brahminical faith, or to an opinion, that all religions are equally acceptable in the sight of God; and partly to an imperfect knowledge, or a slight and superficial consideration, of the nature and blessings of Christianity.

On the subject of the true character and effects of the Hindu superstition, sufficient, it is presumed, has been already said. A system more fatally calculated to contract the understandings, debase the feelings, and destroy the happiness of mankind, could scarcely be devised. The elevated piety of the Brahmin, and the mild virtues of the humbler Hindu, have been too long celebrated by the historian and the poet, in descriptions of equal fidelity. It is time that the veil should be withdrawn, and that their true fea-

tures should be universally known and acknowledged. A faithful picture of their errors and enormities has, indeed, been exhibited in the writings of various authors, more especially, since the establishment of the Asiatic Society; and every succeeding year has afforded fresh proofs of the truth of their representations.

Under the influence of their ancient superstitions, the natives of Hindustan, and of other Oriental regions, must ever remain such as they have been for ages; skilful and ingenious in the various manufactures, or in the cultivation of the different commodities, for which they have so long been celebrated; patient, or rather supine, under the evils of despotic dominion; and perhaps, as far as the Hindus are concerned, more sensible of the advantages which they derive from the mild and equitable administration of the British government. But, as to all those endowments and attainments which distinguish and adorn human nature, which elevate it to its true dignity, and promote its real happiness, they are and must continue to be strangers, so long as they remain the slaves of their native superstitions. It is unnecessary to make any material distinction, with respect to their moral effects, between the religion of Brahma or of Budh, and that of the Arabian Impostor, which for the most part divide between them the great continent of Asia. The errors of Mohammedism, we have already seen, are almost equally inimical to the knowledge, the virtue, and the happiness of its deluded disciples.

The only effectual remedy for the various evils to which the Eastern world has long been subject is the diffusion of Christian knowledge. Christianity, by introducing to its unenlightened natives just and elevated views of the supreme Being, and of moral
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and religious truth ; by presenting to them the purest and most valuable objects of pursuit, the favour of God, and eternal felicity ; by offering the most certain means of obtaining them ; by pointing out that course of life which most directly tends to promote present happiness ; and by affording the most powerful motives of action, and the most awful sanctions of obedience ; would gradually remove that load of ignorance and superstition under which they have so long laboured, and open to them the sure prospect of obtaining the most important and permanent blessings.

In support of the benign and civilizing influence of the Christian religion, we need not, however, resort to theoretical representations, or speculative reasonings. The evidence is before us in the long-extended series of eighteen hundred years ^a, during which it has, either more or less extensively, been the source of public and of private happiness, in every country in which it has flourished. In opposition to the long-established superstitions, and the inveterate prejudices of the Jewish and the Gentile world, aided by the temporal authority of their princes and rulers, the first preachers of Christianity successfully planted it throughout the world. Idolatry, error, vice, and misery, fled in proportion to the prevalence of this divine religion ; and nations, which had long been degraded and enslaved by moral ignorance and corruption, were rescued from their bondage, and sprang into “ liberty, and light, “ and life.”

We have already traced the progress of this heavenly faith from its first promulgation to the present time. We have observed the sacred leaven, originally infused into the universal mass in the

^a See Brief Historic View prefixed.

chosen province of Judæa, gradually extending itself till its influence was felt throughout the globe. We have seen this extensive diffusion of Christianity at first rapidly advancing under the miraculous guidance and direction of its divine Author, and afterwards more slowly proceeding under the ordinary blessing of Heaven. We have remarked the success which has attended the adoption of the means which have been recommended in the course of the present inquiry. *The Scriptures were generally translated* into the vernacular languages of the countries intended to be evangelized^b. In many instances where a considerable body of Christians were settled amidst an uninstructed and uncivilized people, the wise and liberal policy of the parent states granted them *a suitable establishment* of their faith. *The zealous labours of pious and able missionaries* were called forth to rouse the attention and to inform the minds of the unconverted natives; and strenuous, though, it must be confessed, occasionally imprudent and unwarrantable, efforts were made *by the secular governments* to abolish the idolatry and superstitions of their barbarous subjects, and to encourage the profession of the Christian faith. Measures such as these *have never failed*, in the course of years, and to a greater or less degree, to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity in any unenlightened country, and to carry in their train a rich assemblage of national and individual blessings. Why then should it be doubted, that similar effects will follow the adoption of similar measures in the case now under consideration? Why should it be thought incredible, that Hindustan, and, at length, other Asiatic countries, should receive from British piety and zeal the benefits which have hitherto invariably flowed from the introduction of pure and genuine Christianity; that the consequences, which have resulted

^b See Brief Historic View prefixed, passim.

from it in the West, should be experienced in the East? It has appeared, that India and other Oriental countries have already felt the beneficial influence of our holy religion; and that the present circumstances of their natives, and of the British government, are peculiarly favourable to a wise and well-digested attempt to promote its revival and extension amongst them.

Supposing, therefore, the great and important work of translating the Scriptures into the Oriental tongues, that primary and fundamental step towards the successful propagation of Christianity in any country, to be pursued and completed, under the patronage of the College of Fort William, aided by such means as have been before suggested—Supposing, also, an ecclesiastical Establishment to be granted to British India, and an institution for the express purpose of qualifying and employing missionaries to be formed—Supposing, further, the cordial yet prudent cooperation of the supreme government to be exerted in the suppression of the cruel and immoral practices of the natives, and the protection and encouragement of those who should embrace the Christian faith—What, under these circumstances, may rationally be expected to be *the consequences* of such endeavours to promote Christian knowledge in Asia?

It is not to be supposed, that any sudden or extensive revolution in the opinions and habits of the natives would take place, neither is this to be desired. The most prompt and vigorous adoption of the measures before recommended must be expected to be very long in producing any great and visible effect. The means proposed to be used are of a rational and moral nature; the people amongst whom they are to be exercised are not only debased and fettered in the most degrading manner, but are naturally indisposed

disposed to exertion, and sunk in the most deplorable mental apathy. Time must, therefore, be allowed for the operation of the measures which may be employed for their improvement. We can, indeed, look but a very little way into the connexions and consequences of things: but we are warranted, by the soundest deductions of reason, and the most unvarying testimony of past experience, to predict, that Christianity, wherever it is planted, will have its genuine effect on some few; that a change in the moral sentiments and habits, and subsequently in the civil and social condition of the natives of India, and other Asiatic regions, will be gradually effected; that the complicated evils, by which they have been long oppressed, will be progressively lessened; and that blessings will, by degrees, be diffused amongst them, to which they have hitherto been strangers.

Notwithstanding the publicity which would be the unavoidable consequence of the adoption of some of the proposed measures for propagating Christian knowledge in Asia, they would, probably, at first, be deemed inadequate by the natives of Hindustan to produce the intended effect, and considered rather as idle than dangerous to their superstitions. It is important, indeed, that this impression should be general amongst them; and that the idea of the interference of government, for the purpose of converting them, should, as we have before observed, as much as possible, be counteracted. This would tend to allay any apprehensions which might otherwise be excited in their minds by the apparent dispositions which were making around them; and would leave the means to be pursued for their improvement to their natural and undisturbed operation.

I. 1. The dispersion of the Scriptures in the native languages, towards

wards which such considerable progress has been already made, as it would, probably, precede every other measure, and might be executed without much observation, would be likely, in the first instance, to be the most beneficial, and to prepare the minds of the natives for still further attempts to instruct them. Supposing the Scriptures should, as it has been recommended, be accompanied by short and perspicuous tracts on the evidences and nature of the revelation which they contain, it cannot be reasonably doubted, that a considerable spirit of inquiry would be raised amongst the higher classes of the Hindus, which would be constantly spreading and producing increased effects upon their minds. The additional interest with which every circumstance relative to their European rulers has, of late years, been regarded by the natives, and particularly the establishment and subsequent proceedings of the College of Fort William, though it has stopped short of exciting any degree of suspicion or jealousy which might prove prejudicial to the British government, has, notwithstanding, tended to awaken the well-educated amongst them from that indifference and torpor as to moral and religious subjects, by which they have been so long characterized. This must necessarily prove highly favourable to the promotion of the great object in question. The errors and enormities both of the Hindu superstition, and of the Mohammedan imposture, when fully, yet temperately, exposed to the view of their deluded votaries, would, surely, appear in somewhat of their true colours, and affect them by some indistinct discovery of their guilt and absurdity. Christianity, on the other hand, requires only to be presented in her genuine form, to secure, even from prejudiced and superficial observers, the tribute of their admiration of her superior excellence and value. The contrast, which would be exhibited by the dispersion of the Scriptures, between the religion of Christ, and that of Mohammed, of Brahma, or of Budh, would,

would, therefore, be too striking to escape the notice of some of the more acute and reflecting of our Asiatic subjects, and would lead them first to doubt the truth of their own faith, and then to entertain a favourable opinion respecting ours.

It is not probable, that the Hindu, accustomed to the gross representations of his native gods, or even the Mohammedan theft, should at once be capable of rightly appreciating, or even comprehending, the sublime yet rational views which the Christian revelation affords of the character of the supreme Being, of the refined and exalted nature of the duties which it requires, or of the rewards which it proposes. His attention, if he were a follower of Brahma, and of an inferior Caste, would be first excited by arguments better adapted to the level of his understanding. He would probably be struck with that divine spirit of freedom and impartiality, which, breaking the slavish fetters of the Caste, declares the whole human race to be equally the objects of the compassion and favour of the Almighty; and with the general air of mildness and benevolence, which so peculiarly characterizes our holy religion. Instead of the gloomy and forbidding forms, in which the Deity is sometimes arrayed by the superstition of Brahma, he would behold a merciful and gracious Being, the indulgent Father of his creatures, their constant Preserver and unwearied Benefactor, infinitely desirous of their truest happiness, and interposing, in a stupendous manner, to promote it. Instead of the vain and endless round of cruel, painful, or immoral rites, by which the Hindu worshippers are taught to appease the wrath, and to conciliate the favour, of their numerous gods, the native, whose mind was disposed to listen to the institutes of the Christian religion, would find himself at once relieved from that grievous and unprofitable burden, by the cheering promise of forgiveness
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and acceptance through the mediation of the Son of God. He would learn to look up to that Almighty Being, whom he had hitherto either regarded with dread and aversion, or to whom he was altogether a stranger, with filial confidence; to rely on his mercy, to trust his care, to fear his displeasure, and to hope in his goodness. He would perceive in the precepts of the Gospel, a plain and practicable rule of conduct; discover in its promises, an inexhaustible source of wisdom, strength, and comfort; and feel, in its clear and awful declarations of a future righteous judgment, the consequences of which, both as to happiness and misery, are eternal, motives of preeminent force and authority, to confirm and invigorate his faith, and to animate and secure his obedience.

It is not conceived, that the effect of the dispersion of the Bible in Hindustan would be exactly such as has been just described in every case, in which a favourable impression might be made on the mind of a native by that important measure. The consequences of it would, no doubt, be infinitely varied; and with respect to the disciples of the Mohammedan faith would, in every instance, materially differ. But some convictions, of the nature now described, would probably be the result of such a dissemination of Scriptural principles.

We have here anticipated the effect only of the dispersion of the Scriptures in Asia. But this, though one of the most important, is still but one of several other measures, which have been recommended for the purpose of promoting Christianity in the East. An Episcopal Establishment of our national faith, to give to that which is at present but little better than “an airy nothing, a *lo-cal habitation and a name*,” the foundation of an institution in England, for the preparation and appointment of missiona-

ries, whether Europeans or natives ; the establishment of free schools in every district, for the education of the native children ; and the printing and distribution of short moral and religious tracts ; have severally been the subjects of consideration, with a view to the accomplishment of the same great design. Many circumstances concur to render it probable, that some of the measures which have been just enumerated will, at no distant period, be adopted and executed. To calculate, therefore, on the influence of such a plan, is far from being a visionary employment.

If an Establishment of our national religion be eventually given to British India, its influence on the higher orders of the natives, who are connected in any manner with the government, who have much intercourse with the British inhabitants, or who even reside in the neighbourhood of such a visible profession of the Christian faith, must necessarily be considerable, and continually increasing. In addition to the various circumstances which have of late years directed the attention of the well-informed amongst the Hindus to the nature of our national religion, it may be very probably conjectured, that they could not view such a step as the enlargement of its establishment in India, with entire indifference and unconcern. And to awaken their curiosity, to impress them with a stronger idea of the sense we ourselves entertain of the value and importance of Christianity, by increasing the number of its authorized ministers, is precisely that effect, which it is desirable to produce in their minds.

But if, in addition to this preliminary and fundamental measure, able and zealous missionaries are distributed throughout India, and elsewhere in Asia, as opportunities may be afforded, to
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increase the number of those who shall, in a peculiar manner, embody and exemplify the Christian faith, to be the instruments of exposing, mildly and rationally, the superstitions and errors of the natives, and of awakening their regard to our religion, and to be the interpreters of those sacred Scriptures, which may be dispersed amongst them ; it cannot be too much to expect, that at least some few, in every place, may be found, to listen to the voice of truth, to receive the message of the Gospel, and to turn from dumb idols, or delusive imposture, “ to serve the living and “ true God.”

The institution of free schools, for the education of the native children, is a measure, which would be least difficult in its execution, and most certain in its effect. The expediency and the facility of executing this part of the general plan have been already considered ; and no hazard can be incurred by asserting, that, in the course of a few years, and in proportion to the extent to which such means are adopted, a succession of natives would probably be produced, who were either prepared to relinquish, or had actually abandoned, the prejudices and superstitions of their forefathers, and who would thus be disposed to perform the duties, and enjoy the privileges, of Christian subjects.

It is almost unnecessary to add, after what has been before observed upon that point, that the encouragement which it is obviously both the duty and the policy of the British government to afford to native Christians, would materially tend to increase the particular influence of every direct attempt to promote Christianity in Asia.

The conversion even of a considerable number of Hindus, by

any of the measures which have been recommended, would not be productive of any immediate and striking effect on the millions who would yet remain unenlightened. Yet if "one only of a family, or two of a city," should, in process of time, be thus affected, such is the benign nature of our holy religion, and such the dispositions which it generates in its true disciples, that the salutary influence, even of so small a body, would by degrees be felt. And if, as there is every reason to expect, such changes should not be confined to any one particular district, but should extend to every part of India, and to other Asiatic countries, the sum of the general effect would be by no means to be despised. The sacred records of our faith would thus obtain a cordial reception in the East. In one province and kingdom, and in another, some would be found to testify their truth and value; a wider breach would be made in the empire of the Prince of darkness, and the first faint prefaces of the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness" would be clearly discerned. The force of truth is irresistible, and its influence constant and diffusive. This "day of small things" would, doubtless, speedily advance. This cloud, if we may be allowed to change the metaphor, though apparently diminutive and contemptible, would gradually increase, and, at length, pour down its kindly showers on the morally parched and barren regions of Asia, till "the wilderness and the solitary place" would be glad for them, and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose."

In whatever degree the adoption of these various means for promoting Christianity may be productive of conviction in the minds of the Asiatic natives, in the same proportion the influence of sacred truth would effect an important change in their sentiments, habits, and conduct, which could not fail to ameliorate and

and improve their civil and social condition. With respect to the Hindus in particular, the advantageous consequences would be great. The mere bodily exercises enjoined by their superstitions would give way to that reasonable service, which "hath the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come." The helpless innocence of infancy would no longer, as hitherto, be exposed by its deluded and unnatural parent to misery and destruction, but would be received and cherished as the gift of God. The reluctant widow, no longer urged by her dread of the merciless and rapacious Brahmin, would cease to offer her painful sacrifice, and be preserved to her family and her country. The infirmities of age, and the extremities of disease and death, instead of being, as heretofore, aggravated and accelerated by the unfeeling officiousness of the votaries of superstition, would be alleviated by the affectionate cares, and soothed by the sympathetic tenderness, of surrounding relatives and friends; while the fears of the departing spirit would be allayed, and its hopes invigorated and sustained, by the promises of our holy faith. The wretched Suder, and the devoted Pariar, in contradiction to the barbarous institutions of their country, would be recognized as men and as brethren; and admitted, equally with the rest of mankind, to share in the present and future blessings of that divine religion, whose peculiar glory it has ever been "to proclaim liberty to the captive," and "to bring good tidings to the poor."

To the natives of Asia in general, consequences no less beneficial would follow. The enlarged views, which Christianity would unfold to those whose condition is now so deplorable, of their nature and destiny, of their relation to the supreme Being, and of their various duties in the world, would be like a new creation, or as life from the dead. They would begin to think of themselves as rational and immortal creatures, and to live "sibi cario-

"res."

“ res.” They would feel their relative worth and importance in the scale of created being, and find, in the principles of the Christian faith, ample provision for the cultivation of all their intellectual and moral powers, for the exercise of all the charities of social and domestic life, and for the encouragement and completion of all those aspiring and unlimited expectations, which are natural to the human mind, and which Christianity alone can explain and satisfy. Thus gradually emancipated from the slavery of Brahminical superstition and Mohammedan bigotry, and free to improve and enjoy the rich and varied blessings of their native soil, they would pursue, with renewed vigour and activity, the peaceful occupations of art, manufacture, and commerce ; they would cultivate the civilized opinions and manners of European nations ; enlarge their intercourse, and cement their union with Great Britain, either as subjects or as friends ; and ultimately restore to the Eastern world a juster claim to that distinction in civilization, religion, and happiness, which it once preeminently enjoyed.

2. The blessings to be derived by individuals from the diffusion of Christian knowledge in Asia, would be considerably augmented by the advantages, which would result to provinces and kingdoms at large by its general prevalence. The inhabitants of Asia have, for the most part, during many ages, been the subjects both of civil and religious institutions, which have checked their progress in civilization, and deprived them of various benefits, which are enjoyed, under different circumstances, by nations less highly favoured by nature. Notwithstanding the rich commodities which are already the produce of the East, the commerce of which has tended so materially to promote the wealth and power of the West, the former possesses capacities of further mercantile aggrandizement,
of

of which the increased industry of the natives, and the general amendment of their character, by the introduction of a purer system of morals and religion, may enable them to avail themselves. Christianity is, in the highest degree, friendly to every species of exertion and improvement. Whenever, therefore, the principles of our holy faith shall be widely diffused in Asia, the liberal and enlightened views on every subject connected with the policy and the welfare of nations, which invariably follow them, cannot fail to augment the riches and the strength of every nation, into which they may be introduced. There is, indeed, no country in the world, which, if the climate be considered, possesses within itself a more abundant share of the comforts and conveniences of life than India. Consequently, it stands less than most others in need of the reciprocal benefits of commerce. The system, however, of agriculture, and even the various manufactures, in which the natives of India, and of other Eastern countries, have hitherto been deemed unrivalled, may admit of important improvements; and a very numerous assemblage of the arts, usages, and customs of civilized life, which have long contributed to the comfort and advantage of the inhabitants of Europe, would, so far as they could be accommodated to the natural circumstances of Asiatics, be added to the more valuable blessings which they would derive from the beneficent influence of Christianity.

Nor must the introduction of the science and literature of the West be, in this connexion, forgotten. The wisdom of the East, which, in the earlier ages of the world, was so justly celebrated, has long since passed away; and although the researches of late years have unlocked the hidden treasures of Sanscrit learning, and revived the study of letters in our Oriental empire, the diffusion of the scientific discoveries, and the philosophical and literary labours
of

of European scholars, which would naturally accompany the promotion of Christian knowledge, and the extension of the English language, would form a most valuable and interesting addition to the various other advantageous consequences, resulting from the operation of that measure to the natives of the Eastern world ^a.

It may seem enthusiastic to express any sanguine hope of the speedy prevalence of Christianity, in any Oriental country, to so great an extent, as to require a change in their civil constitutions, or forms of judicial administration. Yet long before the great body of the people, or the government of any Asiatic nation, should become professedly Christian, by the operation of the measures before proposed, some material alterations of this nature would be required, suited to their improved condition, and calculated to enforce the observance, and to secure the benign influence of Christian maxims, principles, and regulations. There is, in short, no department, either of public or of private life, in which the beneficial consequences of diffusing Christian knowledge would not be felt in Asia, according to its peculiar situation and circumstances, as they are amongst the nations of Europe.

II. But if such are the advantages which the Eastern world would, probably, derive from the gradual success of this important work, those which would result to Great Britain, as the author and promoter of them, would be scarcely inferior in value. We have already discussed the importance of disseminating the principles of Christianity in Asia, with reference to the permanence of our Oriental empire ; nor can this subject be too seriously or at-

^a The extensive attainments of Tuffussil Hossain Khan afford a remarkable specimen of the capacities of the Hindus for European learning. See account of him by Mr. Anderson.

tensively considered. Without adverting to the arguments which were then adduced in support of this measure, on the ground of policy^b, it is now only necessary to state what would be the probable consequences of its execution and success: and on this point a few observations will be sufficient.

If the natives of Hindustan, in addition to the circumstance of being a conquered people, are at this time under the absolute control, partly of an infatuated and degrading superstition, and partly of an intolerant and malignant imposture, and are therefore destitute of the strongest ties which unite subjects and their rulers in the bonds of loyalty and affection; and are exposed to the perpetual operation of their own contracted views and ungoverned passions, and to the influence of external artifice and intrigue—and if, notwithstanding the acknowledged excellence of the British government, the unbroken series of its successes and victories, the apparent submission of its native enemies, and the expulsion of its foreign foes, and the consequent appearance of strength and consolidation which our Oriental empire now exhibits, it still continues liable to the possible, and not very improbable, operation of the unfavourable causes just specified—can there be a question, with any reflecting mind, whether the interests of Great Britain would not be essentially promoted by the diffusion of Christianity throughout India? whether, in fact, this is not a measure of such paramount importance, that the adoption of it can alone ensure the stability and permanence of its authority in that country?

We have already frequently observed in the course of this inquiry the natural tendency of the Christian religion, to promote the wel-

^b See page 111—114.

fare and prosperity both of the people and their governors, and its actual effects in the history of its progress in different nations. The mild and equal system of government, which it is intended to produce throughout the world, and the peaceful and loyal submission to the ruling powers, which it studiously inculcates, together with the uniform experience of past ages and of the present, place this subject beyond all reasonable doubt. Let us, therefore, suppose, that, by the operation of the measures which have been before stated, a considerable number of the natives of India should be converted to the Christian faith; the beneficial consequences of such a change to the British government would be visible and important. A body of people would be gradually formed, and daily increasing, whose sentiments and habits, as to points of the most interesting and affecting nature, *would coincide with those of the government itself, and of its European subjects*—who, by their conversion to Christianity, would be necessarily obliged to look up to them as to their preservers from the unenlightened or bigoted part of their native brethren—whose hopes and fears would center in them—to whom the security of the British authority would, equally with ourselves, be the great object of their desires and endeavours—who would feel a deep sense of their obligations to those who had called them to the inestimable knowledge of the Gospel—and who would, for all these and for various other weighty reasons, be cordially attached to the government, to which they must owe their continued safety and happiness; anxious to defeat the secret machinations of its enemies, ready, upon every emergency, to support it at the hazard of their property and their lives, and prepared even to die in its defence ^c.

^c “The newly converted Christians on the coast of Malabar are the chief support of the Dutch East India Company at Cochin, and are always ready to take up arms in their defence.” See Bartolomeo’s Voyage, p. 207.

Nor is the stability and permanence of our Oriental empire the only object which, as far as human wisdom and foresight can extend, would be effectually secured by the promotion of Christianity in Asia. The advantages, which Great Britain already derives from its commercial intercourse with the East, would, probably, be much augmented. The introduction of many new articles of produce and manufacture, which would be the result of the progressive improvement of its inhabitants, whilst they tended to increase the means of their own subsistence, would enlarge the resources of Great Britain; their acquaintance with the arts and manners of more civilized life would at the same time occasion an additional demand for European articles, and consequently further contribute to the wealth and power of our own country. This argument strongly applies not only to British India, but to the peninsula beyond the Ganges, to the Asiatic islands, and to the empire of China, our intercourse with which would be materially facilitated and enlarged by the successful propagation of Christianity. To pursue it further would, however, lead into a wide field of conjecture and discussion. It can only therefore be stated among the probable consequences of the prosecution of that great and important measure.

One other point remains to be mentioned, as to the consequences of our diffusion of Christian knowledge in Asia, which is, also, highly interesting to Great Britain. This relates to its character and reputation amongst the great empires of the world. The eyes of all other nations have long been directed to our conduct towards our Indian possessions. They have watched the progress of our power, and marked the manner in which it has been employed. They have, it is true, when compared with the exaggerated accounts which have been studiously circulated throughout Europe, witnessed but little of tyranny or oppression in the exer-

tion of our territorial influence, but have seen it, for the most part, exercised for the civil protection and welfare of our Oriental subjects. Yet they have observed no direct and strenuous efforts for their moral and religious improvement. But, whatever may have been the wrongs which India has sustained at our hands, to impart to her the blessings of CHRISTIANITY, would be to make more than ample compensation to her for them all; and would tend, in the most decisive and satisfactory manner, to prove to the nations of the world, that we are, in some measure, worthy of the extensive dominion which the divine Providence has there assigned to us. But if *they* were even altogether indifferent to our Oriental conduct, we ought not ourselves to be insensible to what becomes our character, and forms so essential a part of our duty as a Christian nation.

Whilst, then, the usurping government of one mighty western empire is, in a greater or less degree, spreading desolation and terror as far as its destructive arms and influence have hitherto been extended, and is extinguishing, to the utmost of its power, in every subjugated country, the traces of genuine freedom, virtue, and happiness; what fairer opportunity of effectually eclipsing the false and unenviable splendour of our haughty rival can be presented to us, than that of diffusing throughout India the blessings of civilization and religion, and of eventually connecting the prosperity and glory of the British islands with the welfare and happiness of the whole Oriental world?

That such would be the consequences of our diffusion of Christian knowledge in Asia, may be confidently predicted from the revealed declarations, and from the uniform proceedings towards nations, of the great moral Governor of the universe. Both unite in
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convincing us, that thus to cooperate with Him in his gracious designs for the improvement and happiness of his creatures, is the surest way to promote the security and the real greatness of any people.

But we may extend our views yet further. It is painful to one who is zealous for the honour of that divine religion, which Heaven has in mercy vouchsafed to mankind, to behold the contracted sphere in which it has hitherto exerted its benign and salutary influence. Nearly the whole of the vast continents of Asia and Africa, together with immense regions in that of America, have for ages continued either involved in the gross darkness and misery of Paganism, or subject to the delusive guidance of Mohammedan error and imposture. This gloomy and lamentable scene will not, however, always remain. The unfulfilled prophecies of sacred Scripture open to the contemplative mind a magnificent and boundless prospect of the triumphs of Christianity in some future age. The eternal and irreversible decree has gone forth, that “the kingdoms of this world shall,” at length, “become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.” And, though its execution has for a long time appeared to linger, we cannot doubt, that, in the end, it will surely be accomplished. The pillars of the Brahminical superstition have evidently begun to totter, and the crescent of the Mohammedan power has long since been in its wane.

By what extraordinary means and operations it may please the Almighty Ruler of the world to accelerate their downfall, and to prepare the nations now subject to their malignant sway, for the mild and beneficent dominion of their rightful Lord, cannot be safely conjectured. To discharge a necessary duty, which is most closely connected with the accomplishment of both these objects, cannot,

cannot, however, but be a service acceptable to the great Author of the prophetic declarations of the ultimate triumphs of Christianity throughout the world.

Every motive, therefore, which can affect or animate us as a Christian nation, unequalled in knowledge, wealth, power, and general prosperity, urges us to the important work of propagating our holy faith in Asia. The providence of God, in the various circumstances of our connexion with India, seems to point out, by no uncertain indications, the supreme design in granting to these islands so extensive an Oriental empire. Our obligations as a nation professing Christianity—the moral state of our Indian subjects—the opportunity which we enjoy of ameliorating their condition—the means which we possess of translating the divine records of our religion into the Oriental tongues, and of promoting Christian knowledge in Asia—and the various great and beneficial consequences, which would result from the execution of that design, both to the inhabitants of the Eastern world, and to our own country—all unite in proclaiming, with a voice of mingled authority, admonition, and encouragement, “This is the way” of solemn and indispensable duty, of enlarged philanthropy and charity, of unquestionable policy, and of certain and unrivalled glory.

To one imploring and warning voice, which, to the dishonour of our country, had been too long heard in vain, the legislature of Great Britain has, at length, afforded an attentive and propitious ear. The wrongs and the miseries of *Africa*, so far as we were the occasion of them, have been effectually pitied and redressed. The guilty share which we had so long taken in the slavery of her hapless sons has been, at length, indignantly, and, with a few exceptions, unanimously, renounced: and with it one of the most formidable

formidable obstacles, which has hitherto impeded the civilization and improvement of that ill-fated continent, has thus, at this late but welcome period, been removed, we trust, for ever.

Having discharged this debt of justice and compassion to one great quarter of the globe, let us not forget that which we still owe to another, whose claims to our attention and regard are indisputably stronger, and with whose interests and welfare our own are far more intimately connected. The attempt to improve the condition of Asia may, indeed, *partially* fail; but the beneficial effects which must, in any case, result from it, would fully justify and reward it. Supposing, however, what is barely possible, that such an attempt should *totally* fail, let it be remembered, that even then England would possess a pure and elevated source of satisfaction, in reflecting THAT SHE HAS DONE HER DUTY, to which she cannot otherwise be entitled. Should she, on the contrary, refuse to obey the call which the Providence of God is now so evidently directing to her, the time may come, when in the disaffection of her Indian subjects, and the dismemberment of her Oriental empire, she may discern the punishment of her neglect. But the opportunity of retrieving her error may then be lost for ever.

Let British India, then, and, through its medium, let the widely extended continent of Asia at large, receive from our highly-favoured country, our literature, our civil, social, and domestic blessings, our morals, and our religion. Let a generous and enlightened effort to impart them, at least, be fairly made. And, while we are confidently assured, that with "such a sacrifice God will be well pleased," let us look to Him for that auspicious approbation and favour, which can alone ensure its complete and permanent success.

NOTES.

Note A. Page 1.

THE Author deemed it unnecessary, in so brief a sketch of the Progress of Christianity, as that to which he is confined, to dwell more largely on the moral and religious state of the Gentile world. Those who are conversant with the classical writers of antiquity must be fully aware, both of the general corruption of manners, which prevailed even in the most enlightened and civilized of the heathen nations, and of the erroneous, unsatisfactory, and contradictory sentiments of the Grecian and Roman philosophers, on the principal subjects of morality and religion. For a full discussion of all these points, the Author would refer to the elaborate work of Dr. Leland, on the Advantages and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, and to Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. vol. i. chap. 1.

Note B. Page 7.

“Et horum tamen opera,” observes the learned Grotius, “dogma illud intra annos triginta, aut circiter, non tantum per omnes Romani imperii partes, sed ad Parthos quoque et Indos pervenit.” De Verit. §. 21.

The following eloquent description of the rapid progress of Christianity, notwithstanding the various difficulties which opposed it, by the masterly hand of Erasmus, is too interesting to be omitted.

“Sola veritas Evangelica intra paucos annos cunctas totius orbis regiones occupavit, persuasit, ac vicit: Græcos ac barbaros, doctos et indoctos, plebeios ac reges ad se pertrahens. Tam efficax erat hujus veritatis phar-

“ inacum, ut tot hominum millia, relictis patriis legibus, relicta majorum
 “ religione, relictis voluptatibus ac vitiis, quibus ab incunabilis affueverant,
 “ novam ac peregrinam doctrinam amplecterentur, et ex diversis linguis,
 “ diversis institutis, in humilem quandam philosophiam consentirent; præ-
 “ fertim quum nulla ætas magis fuerit instructa, vel eruditionis facundiæ-
 “ que præfidiis, vel monarcharum potentia; quumque mundus omnibus
 “ suis præfidiis pugnaret adversus inermem Evangelii veritatem, tamen effi-
 “ cere non potuit, quin ea primum occupata Græcia, Neronis urbem et au-
 “ lam invaderet, moxque per omnes Romani imperii provincias sese sparge-
 “ ret usque ad Gades et Indos, usque ad Afros et Scythas,

“ Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.

“ Hæ gentes, linguis, legibus, ritibus, moribus, institutis, diis, religione,
 “ forma, plurimum inter se diffidebant. Mox ea tanta discordia facti con-
 “ cordes eandem cantionem canere cœperunt, Jesum Christum unicum or-
 “ bis Dominum Servatorem, laudibus vehementes.” D. Eras. Rot. in Para-
 phrasi in Evangelium Lucæ.

Note C. Page 11.

The note here referred to has by mistake been inserted at the bottom of page 11, and immediately follows the reference.

Note D. Page 19.

The Author has expressed himself doubtfully on the subject of the continuance of miraculous powers in the fourth century. For, although he can by no means assent to the opinions of those who maintain, that at this period miracles had entirely ceased, he has no hesitation in saying, that after the second century, but especially after the æra of Constantine, the accounts of miracles, which are transmitted to us by ecclesiastical historians and others, must be received with caution, and the evidence, which they adduce in their support, be examined with care. Some of these accounts may be safely admitted to be true, while many others must be entirely rejected.

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In general, it may be observed, that the circumstances attending these relations, and the nature of the objects in support of which miracles are stated to have been wrought, are sufficient to direct a discerning and impartial reader in his judgment respecting them. This is the medium which is pursued by Mosheim, and by the learned Author of the “Remarks on Ecclesiastical History,” neither of whom will be suspected of any tendency to credulity or enthusiasm.

Note E. Page 20.

It is probable, however, either that the Christians on the coast of Malabar, or some others in the peninsula, were converted at an earlier period than is here assigned; as ecclesiastical history reports, that St. Bartholomew and Pantænus preached there, and that at the Council of Nice, in the year 325, a Bishop from India was amongst the number which composed that memorable synod.

Note F. Page 44.

There are still, however, considerable remains of Christianity in the Turkish dominions, both in Europe and Asia. In the former, it is calculated that two thirds of the inhabitants are Christians; and in Constantinople itself there are above twenty Christian Churches, and above thirty in Thessalonica. Philadelphia, now called Ala Shahir, has no fewer than twelve. The whole island of Chio is governed by Christians, and some islands of the Archipelago are inhabited by Christians only.

Note G. Page 50.

A curious account of these corrupt practices of the Jesuits is contained in a letter of Mr. Maigrot, quoted by Millar in his History of the Propagation of Christianity, from a work entitled, “Popery against Christianity,” under the signature of Parthenopæus Hereticus.

Note H. Page 72.

The constitution and course of nature, together with the final causes which are discernible in all its parts, afford satisfactory proofs of the providence of God. It has accordingly been generally acknowledged in all ages and nations throughout the world. The philosophers of Greece and Rome, notwithstanding the scepticism which some of them indulged, for the most part professed and taught this important truth, and the sages of the Eastern world expressly asserted it.

There were, indeed, some ancient sects, of whom the Epicureans were the most celebrated, and certain individual philosophers belonging to others, who, although they admitted the being of a God, rejected the doctrine of his providence, as inconsistent with the divine tranquillity and happiness. There were others, among whom may be numbered the great master of the Peripatetic school, who acknowledged some kind of providence, but restricted it either to the heavens, to the exclusion of the affairs of this lower world, or to a general, in opposition to a particular, superintendence of its concerns. The most considerable philosophers, however, of antiquity, and, amongst others, Socrates, the wisest of them all, maintained the universal extent, and the particular as well as the general control, of the divine Providence. The sentiments of this extraordinary man, as they are recorded by Xenophon, are particularly clear and striking : Καὶ γὰρ ἐπιμελεῖσθαι θεὸς ἐνόμιζεν ἀνθρώπων οὐχ ὅν τρόπον οἱ πολλοὶ νομίζουσιν. Οὗτοι μὲν γὰρ οἴονται τὰς θεὰς τὰ μὲν εἰδέναι, τὰ δὲ οὐκ εἰδέναι. Σωκράτης δὲ πάντα μὲν ἡγεῖτο θεὸς εἰδέναι τὰ τε λεγόμενα καὶ πραττόμενα, καὶ τὰ σιγῇ βεβληόμενα, πανταχῇ δὲ παρεῖναι καὶ σημαίνειν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις περὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπείων πάντων. Mem. i. 1. 19. see also lib. iv. cap. 3. The following expressions, also, of the Roman Orator are remarkable : “ Nihil “ Deo præstantius, ab eo igitur regi necesse est.” “ Dico igitur providentia Deorum mundum et omnes mundi partes et initio constitutas esse, et “ omni tempore administrari.” De Nat. Deor. lib. ii. cap. 2. See also de Leg. cap. ii. n. 15. “ Pietate ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod “ Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes “ gentes nationesque superavimus.” De Arusp. Respon. n. 19. After all, it must be admitted, that both the philosophical and popular opinions of antiquity

quity concerning these important subjects were to the last degree unsettled, and very erroneous. See Warburton's *Divine Legation*, and Leland's valuable work already quoted.

The sentiments of some of the Oriental philosophers will appear from the following passages. "The Vedantis," says Sir William Jones, "being unable to form a distinct idea of brute matter independent of mind, or to conceive that the work of supreme goodness was left a moment to itself, imagine that the Deity is *ever present to his work*." *Dissertation on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India*.

In the *Baghvat-Geeta*, p. 84, the supreme Being is styled "the Creator of all things, and from whom all things proceed."

The following is, also, a description of the supreme Being in one of the sacred books of the Hindus: "As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; as he is invisible, he can have no form; but from what we behold of his works we may conclude, that he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing all things, and *present every where*." Dow's *Dissert.* p. xl. See Appendix to Dr. Robertson's *Disquisition concerning India*, p. 323.

It should be added, that the learned disciples of Buddha do not acknowledge in their writings a supreme Being presiding over and Author of the universe. They assert, however, a first cause, under the vague denomination of Nature. See *Dissertation on Singhala, or Ceylon*, by Captain Mahony, *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii.

Note I. Page 73.

"Independently," observes Sir William Jones, "of our interest in corroborating the multiplied evidences of revealed religion, we could scarcely gratify our minds with a more useful and rational entertainment, than the contemplation of the wonderful revolutions in kingdoms and states which have happened within little more than four thousand years: *revolutions almost as fully demonstrative of an all-ruling Providence*, as the structure of the universe, and the final causes which are discernible in its whole extent, and even in its minutest parts." *Asiatic Researches*, vol. iv. *Diss.* on *Asiatic History*.

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The learned and eloquent Bishop of Meaux, in his admirable Discourse on Universal History, thus expresses the leading design of the divine Providence in the government of the world.

“ Plus vous vous accoutumerez à fuivre les grandes choses, et à les rappeler à leurs principes, plus vous ferez en admiration de ces conseils de la Providence.—Dieu ne déclare pas tous les jours ses volontés par ses prophètes touchant les rois et les monarchies qu’il élève, ou qu’il détruit. Mais l’ayant fait tant de fois dans ces grands empires dont nous venons de parler, il nous montre par ces exemples fameux ce qu’il fait dans tous les autres ; et il apprend aux rois *ces deux vérités fondamentales ; premièrement, que c’est lui qui forme les royaumes, pour les donner à qui il lui plaît ; et secondement, qu’il fait les faire servir, dans le tems, et dans l’ordre qu’il a résolu, aux desseins qu’il a sur son peuple.*” Bossuet, Disc. sur l’Hist. Univ. part. iii. chap. 1.

Note K. Page 103.

“ No one,” says a writer already quoted, “ who has been in India, will be a very strenuous advocate, I presume, for upholding a religion which annually occasions bloodshed, excessive tumult, and murder. Let any one recollect what annually passes between the immense multitudes of the right hand and left hand Castes, as they are called. Such outrages are exhibited every year in Madras itself, in spite of military drawn out to oppose it. What state of society, let me ask, is this ? Can it be called civilization ? or does it partake of the private war of the barbarous and feudal ages ? What are we to think of *human sacrifices* ? A few years since, the Brahmins of a certain Pagoda, in the Tanjore country, murdered for sacrifice a boy of eleven years of age : having killed him, they took out a particular part near the vertebræ of the back, and offered it to the idol. The affair was fully examined and proved, and the punishment decreed was banishment beyond the Coloroons. The exiles accordingly went beyond that river, and returned in two or three days !” Letter to Dr. Vincent, ut supra.

Note

Note L. Page 104.

This calculation of Mr. Chambers has been thought by competent judges to be somewhat exaggerated. Dr. Buchanan's Memoir gives the number annually sacrificed within a definite circuit round Calcutta. But it may be doubted, whether an area of double the extent in any other part of the country would give any thing like his calculation.

Note M. Page 107.

The religion of Buddha is probably more ancient than that of Brahma, and contradicts some of its essential points, particularly concerning the creation, and the immortality of the soul. Buddha is said to have taken for his principles, wisdom, justice, and benevolence; from which emanate ten commandments, distributed under the three heads of thought, word, and deed, which are held by his followers as the true and only rule of their conduct. For a more particular account of the religion of Buddha, see two dissertations on this subject by Captain Mahony and Mr. Joinville, in the seventh volume of the Asiatic Researches.

Note N. Page 126.

It is true, that Mohammed expressed himself strongly in praise of the pursuit of learning^a; that the Koran has been translated into several languages; and that the perusal of it by the Muselmans is not only permitted, but encouraged. Yet as all discussions and controversies respecting its truth or divinity are forbidden, and as the study of it is not considered as a sacred duty by the great body of the people, the expression in the text is not perhaps too strong.

^a Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones, Appendix B.

Note O. Page 127.

This celebrated version has, on the one hand, been too highly and exclusively extolled, while, on the other, it has been too indiscriminately censured. Some striking observations occur respecting it in the late Bishop Horsley's learned translation of the Prophet Hosea, p. 166, 175, 8, 9. But see Brett's Dissertation on the ancient Versions of the Bible, for a more full and satisfactory account of it.

Note P. Page 138.

The imperfections of this version of the four Gospels induced the late William Chambers, Esq. an admirable Persian scholar, to undertake a new translation from the original Greek. But he had scarcely finished twenty chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, before the Eastern world was deprived, by his death, of the benefit of his labours. The loss has, however, since been repaired.

Note Q. Page 138.

(The reference to this note ought to have been at page 139, at the words "printed off.")

The translator is Johannes Lassar, a native of China, and Professor of the Chinese language, assisted by a Chinese Munshi. Being an Armenian Christian, he translates from the Armenian Bible, said to be one of the most accurate versions of the Scriptures extant. The translation is in the Mandarin dialect, with marginal readings as to ambiguous expressions, in the familiar dialects. For a more complete account of this great and interesting work, see Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, note M.

Note R. Page 146.

"Every proof sheet," says Mr. Carey, "is carefully revised by us all, compared with the Greek, subjected to the opinion and animadversions of several Pundits, and part of it translated by a native into a collateral language,"

“guage, of which we can form some idea, before it be printed off.” Bapt. Miss. Acc. xiii. 449.

Note S. Page 147.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has, since the composition of this Dissertation, with a liberality which reflects on it the highest honour, transmitted two sums of one thousand pounds to Calcutta, in aid of the translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental languages. It has also resolved to supply the mission at Karafs with a fount of Arabic types, for the purpose of printing the New Testament in the Turkish language, together with paper sufficient for printing five thousand copies of this translation. This laudable Society has further in contemplation an edition of the Scriptures in the Calmuc and Arabic dialects.

Note T. Page 153.

It has been the universal complaint of all the writers who have considered the subject of the propagation of Christianity amongst the heathen, that the irreligious and immoral lives of European Christians have formed a most serious hindrance to this important work. It is particularly insisted on by Mr. Stephenson, Chaplain to the East India Company at Fort St. George early in the last century, in his admirable letter to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. See Millar's Hist. of the Propagation of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 565. This circumstance might, indeed, have been stated in a former part of the Dissertation, among the obstacles to the introduction of Christianity into India.

Note U. Page 179.

The character of a missionary has been so admirably drawn by the present Bishop of Worcester, in his Sermon quoted in page 73, that the Author cannot refrain from enriching his work with it.

“Indeed the difficulties, the dangers, the distresses of all sorts, which

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“ must

“ must be encountered by the Christian missionary, require a more than or-
 “ dinary degree of that virtue, [charity,] and will only be sustained by him,
 “ whom a fervent love of Christ, and the quickening graces of his Spirit,
 “ have anointed, as it were, and consecrated to this arduous service. Then
 “ it is that we have seen the faithful minister of the word go forth with the
 “ zeal of an Apostle, and the constancy of a Martyr. We have seen him
 “ forsake ease and affluence, a competency at least, and the ordinary com-
 “ forts of society, and with the Gospel in his hand, and his Saviour in his
 “ heart, make his way through burning deserts, and the howling wilderness;
 “ braving the rage of climates, and all the inconveniences of long and pe-
 “ rilous voyages; submitting to the drudgery of learning barbarous lan-
 “ guages, and to the disgust of complying with barbarous manners; watch-
 “ ing the dark suspicions, and exposed to the capricious fury of impotent
 “ savages; courting their offensive society, adopting their loathsome cus-
 “ toms, and assimilating his very nature almost to theirs; in a word, *endur-*
 “ *ing all things, becoming all things*, in the patient hope of finding a way to
 “ their good opinion, and of succeeding, finally, in his unwearied endea-
 “ vours to make the word of life and salvation not unacceptable to them.

“ I confess, when I reflect on all these things, I humble myself be-
 “ fore such heroic virtue; or, rather, I adore the grace of God in Jesus
 “ Christ, which is able to produce such examples of it in our degenerate
 “ world.”

To the preceding eloquent description of a missionary, the Author begs
 leave to subjoin the following animated observations of the learned Erasmus,
 on the most effectual means of propagating the Christian religion.

“ Precor autem, ut Jesus, immortalis totius orbis Monarcha, cui divinitus
 “ data est omnis potestas in cœlo et in terra, spiritum suum impartiat tum
 “ populis, tum principibus: ut evangelica pietas inter nos bene constituta,
 “ quam latissime propagetur, non invadendis aut diripiendis aliorum regi-
 “ onibus; sic enim pauperiores redduntur, non meliores: sed evangelica
 “ philosophia sinceriter *per viros evangelico spiritu præditos ubique prædican-*
 “ *da; atque ita vivendo, ut nostræ pietatis fragrantia plurimos alliciat ad*
 “ *ejusdem instituti professionem.* Sic nata est, sic crevit, sic late prolata est,
 “ sic constabilita est evangelica ditio: diversis autem rationibus sic nunc in
 “ angustum

“ angustum contractam, ac propemodum explosam videmus, si totius orbis
“ vastitatem consideres. Iisdem itaque præfidiis oportet restituere collap-
“ sam, dilatare contractam, constabilire vacillantem, quibus primum nata
“ est, et aucta, et firmata.” Des. Erasmi. in Paraph. in Evang. Marc.

THE END.

ERRATA.

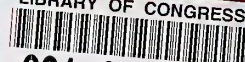
- Page 20. *for Wiede read Wredé*
— 23. *for Authafis read Autharis*
— 24. *for Wilfeburg read Wilteburg*
— 28, 29. *for Aufcarius read Anfcarius*
-

The Binder is desired to place the Chronological Chart facing the Brief Historic View, page 1.





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